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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 11 JUNE 2024 | TUESDAY | BENGALURU | 4 DHU'L-HIJJAH, 1445 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 140 | Pages: 8

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BJP takes top 4 ministries, 'appeases' allies

BJP gets Home, Defence, Finance & MEA making up crucial Cabinet Committee on Security

Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with Union Ministers were sworn in on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Signalling continuity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday retained Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaishankar in charge of the four high-profile ministries - Home, Defence, Finance and External Affairs - respectively in his new government.

The four ministers in charge of these portfolios make up the crucial Cabinet Committee on Security headed by the Prime Minister.

Among new entrants to the Union Cabinet, former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has got Agriculture and Rural Development Ministries, while BJP President JP Nadda has returned to the Health Ministry, a portfolio he had held in the Modi government's first term before he took charge of the ruling BJP first as working president in 2019 and then as the full-fledged president in 2020.

BJP has retained most of the strategic ministries driving the government's signature programmes while giving up on a few for allies, especially the TDP and JD(U) which have got Civil Aviation, and Panchayati Raj, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying respectively.

Arjun Ram Meghwal will continue as Law Minister and Sarbananda Sonowal has retained the Shipping portfolio.

Among the five members of the BJP's allies in the Union Cabinet, JD(S)'s HD Kumaraswamy has got Heavy Industries, and Steel ministries, and Lalan Singh (JD(U)) Panchayati Raj, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Ministries. "I am deeply grateful to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri @narendramodi , for appointing me as the Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, in its third consecutive term," Kumaraswamy posted on 'X'.

Karnataka's V Somanna gets Minister of State for Jal Shakti and Railways BJP leader CR Patil has got the Jal Shakti Ministry. *—PTI*

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KISAN NIDHI FUNDS, 3 CR HOMES GET PUSH UNDER 3.0

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Taking charge as prime minister in his third term, Narendra Modi on Monday signed his first file authorising the release of 17th installment of the 'PM Kisan Nidhi' funds amounting to nearly Rs 20,000 crore, which will benefit around 9.3 crore farmers. After signing on to the release of funds, Modi said, "Ours is a government fully committed to 'kisan kalyan' (farmers' welfare). It is, therefore, fitting that the first file signed on taking charge is related to it. We want to keep working even more for farmers and the agriculture sector in the times to come." Cabinet approves constructing 3 crore houses The Union Cabinet approved government assistance for the construction of 3 crore houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

DROUGHT-HIT FARMERS BLOCK HIGHWAY IN LATUR

LATUR, 10 JUNE

Several hundred farmers blocked the Latur-Ambejogai highway in Renapur tehsil here for two hours on Monday afternoon protesting against the alleged delay in distributing drought subsidies and other relief measures. Renapur tehsil has been declared drought-affected but eligible persons are yet to get subsidies and other relief though Know Your Customer (KYC) details have been filled by all of them, Gajan Bolange of the Shetkari Sanghatana, which organised the protesters told reporters. "More than 70 per cent farmers have not received drought subsidies or other relief. We want a clarification. Authorities must ask the banks why the money has not been deposited. We are also seeking Rs 50,000 rpt 50,000 per hectare crop insurance subsidy," they said.

LEOPARD AT SWEARING-IN?

A feline animal seen walking (circled) as BJP MP Durga Das Uikey greets President Droupadi Murmu after completing the oath-taking, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday; Police claim it was a cat *PHOTO: PTI*

PORTFOLIOS IN THE CABINET

- **Amit Shah:** Home Affairs & Cooperation
- **Rajnath Singh:** Defence
- **Nirmala Sitharaman:** Finance & Corporate Affairs
- **Nitin Jairam Gadkari :** Road Transport & Highways
- **S Jaishankar:** External Affairs
- **Pralhad Joshi:** Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution& New and Renewable Energy
- **Ashwini Vaishnaw:** Railways, I/B & Electronics, IT
- **Jagat Prakash Nadda:** Health & Family Welfare & Chemicals &Fertilisers
- **Shivraj Singh Chouhan:** Agriculture and Farmers Welfare & Rural Development
- **Piyush Goyal:** Commerce & Industry
- **Annpurna Devi:** Women and Child Development
- **Dharmendra Pradhan:** Education
- **HD Kumaraswamy:** Heavy Industries & Steel
- **Mansukh Mandaviya:** Labour and Employment & Youth Affairs and Sports
- **Kiren Rijiju:** Parliamentary Affairs & Minority Affairs
- **Jyotiraditya M Scindia:** Communications & Development of North Eastern Region
- **Rajiv Ranjan Singh:** Panchayati Raj & Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying
- **Manohar Lal:** Housing and Urban Affairs & Power
- **Jitan Ram Manjhi:** Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- **Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu:** Civil Aviation
- **Hardeep Singh Puri:** Petroleum & Natural Gas
- **G Kishan Reddy:** Coal & Mines
- **Chirag Paswan:** Food Processing Industries

3 die, homes razed as flash flood hits Sikkim village

GANGTOK, 10 JUNE

Three people died and several houses were damaged after heavy rain triggered a flash flood in Majua village in Sikkim's Namchi district on Monday morning, officials said. The incident took place in Yangang area of the district, around 53km from here, they said. "Apart from the two deaths, a woman was seriously injured after the flash flood hit the village around 6 am, while another person is missing. The injured has been rushed to Singtam District Hospital. At least seven houses have also been damaged," an official said. The state's disaster management teams are carrying out rescue work at the spot with the help of police personnel and locals, he said. Sikkim Krantikari Morcha supremo Prem Singh Tamang, who is is set to take oath as chief minister for a second term later on Monday, has taken stock of the situation, the official said. *—PTI*

Outrage erupts over Urban Company's auto-pilot feature

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Hundreds of women, mainly gig workers affiliated with the Gig and Platform Workers Union (GIPSWU), stormed the Bengaluru headquarters of Urban Company on Monday in protest against the company's new terms of service. The new terms have been labeled "horrific" by the workers, who claim they are forced to work in "slave-like conditions." The primary complaint is the app's "auto-pilot" feature, which assigns jobs to workers without their consent. Tamil Selvi, a GIPSWU leader, questioned how a tech platform could implement such features without worker input. Manisha, another union leader, emphasised that the auto-assigned jobs restrict their basic human freedom. They further alleged that if they reject assigned jobs, they face termination and account suspension. In response to the growing unrest, the GIPSWU, with the backing of the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers (IFAT), is planning a nationwide strike. Chandan Kumar, the national spokesperson for GIPSWU, compared the working conditions to "18th-century slavery," highlighting how digitization, intended for job creation, is instead exploiting the working class. Urban Company has yet to respond to the allegations. *—Salar News*

Manipur CM's convoy on way to Jiribam ambushed

IMPHAL, 10 JUNE

Suspected militants ambushed the advance security convoy of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh in Kangpokpi district on Monday morning, leaving one personnel injured, police said.

The convoy was on its way to violence-hit Jiribam district when it came under attack around 10.30am near Kotlen village along a stretch of National Highway-53, they said.

Multiple gunshots were fired at the vehicles of the security forces, who retaliated, a police officer said.

The driver of one of the convoy vehicles suffered bullet injuries on his right shoulder, and he is being taken to a hospital in Imphal, the officer said.

"Chief Minister Biren Singh, who is yet to reach Imphal from Delhi, was planning to visit Jiribam to take stock of the situation in the district," an official told PTI.

Two police outposts, a forest beat office and at least 70 houses were torched in Jiribam by suspected militants on Saturday in a fresh bout of violence in the ethnic strife-torn state. Meanwhile, 600 people affected by fresh incidents of violence in Manipur have started arriving in Assam's Cachar district in search of safety, the local MLA said on Monday. *—PTI*

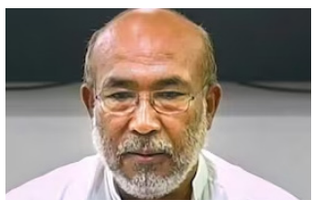

PHOTO: PTI

Manipur is waiting for peace for the last one year. There was peace in Manipur 10 years ago. It felt like gun culture had finished there. But the state has suddenly seen violence. Violence has to be stopped and it has to be given priority.

-Mohan Bhagwat, RSS Chief

LeT role suspected in J&K attack, search ops on

JAMMU, 10 JUNE

A massive manhunt is underway for three foreign terrorists, possibly of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, responsible for the deadly attack on pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi that resulted in the loss of nine lives, officials involved in the investigation said on Monday.

Based on the statements recorded by those injured in the attack, the officials said they have not ruled out the possibility of a fourth person being present at the spot.

Following the attack, a joint operation was launched involving the police, the Army, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and central intelligence agencies. Survivors are recording their statements as part of the ongoing probe into the attack.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba terror outfit, initially claimed responsibility for the attack but retracted its statement later. *—PTI*

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COUNTING ON 13 JULY

EC to hold bypolls in 13 seats across 7 states on 10 July

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

The Election Commission of India has announced the dates to hold bye-elections to fill vacancies in 13 Assembly constituencies of seven states.

The elections will be conducted on 10 July and the counting of the votes will be done on 13 July.

The commission to hold bye-elections on one seat of Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Madhya Pradesh, two seats of Uttarakhand, three seats of Himachal Pradesh, and four seats of Uttarakhand.

The seats in Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, and Madhya Pradesh are Rupauli, Vikravandi, Amarwara (ST) and Jalandhar West (SC) respectively. The by-elections on two seats of Uttarakhand - Badrinath and Manglaur and the three seats of Himachal Pradesh - Dehra, Nalagarh, and Hamirpur will also be conducted.

PHOTO: PTI

Meanwhile, the four seats of West Bengal on which the bye-polls are set to take place include Raiganj, Ranaghat Dakshin (SC), Maniktala and Bagda (SC). The last date to file nominations is 21 June and candidates can withdraw their candidature till 26 June.

These seats were vacant due to the resignations or deaths of the sitting MLAs. The seats of Rupauli, Amarwara (ST), Jalandhar West (SC), Badrinath, Dehra, Nalagarh, Hamirpur, Raiganj, Ranaghat Dakshin (SC), and Bagda fell vacant due to the resignation of respective MLAs of the seat while the seat of Vikravandi, Maniktala, and Manglaur fell vacant due to the death of the respective MLAs of the seat. An adequate number of EVMs and VVPATs have been made available and all steps have been taken to conducted polls smoothly. *—PTI*

PROTEST BY DALITS TURNS VIOLENT IN CHHATTISGARH

BALODABAZAR, 10 JUNE

Several cars, motorcycles and a government building were torched after a protest called by the Satnamis (Dalits) to denounce damage to their religious pillar in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar turned violent on Monday.

Angry protesters also pelted stones at police personnel, they said. On the intervening night of 15-16 May, unidentified people vandalised a 'jaitkhamb', a structure worshipped by Satnamis as a sacred symbol, near holy Amar Gufa in Giroudpuri dham in Balodabazar. Satnamis had called for a demonstration at Dussehra Maidan and gherao of the collector's office on Monday. A large number of Satnamis gathered to attend the protest. *—PTI*

USE 12TH MARKS FOR ADMISSIONS

Ex-HC judges urge govt to scrap NEET

CHENNAI, 10 JUNE

Retired judge of Madras High Court Justice AK Rajan has asked the Tamil Nadu government to take immediate steps to eliminate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) through legal and/or legislative procedures and make higher secondary examination marks the sole criteria for admission to first year medical programmes.

The government should ensure equality in opportunity to students from different boards of education and normalisation of scores may be followed, the retired judge who headed a high-level committee, has recommended.

The panel was constituted after DMK stormed to power in the state in 2021, to study the impact of the NEET-based admission process.

Student organisations protest against the 'irregularities' in the NEET-UG 2024 entrance exam result in New Delhi on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

The committee's report, based on extensive data analysis and inputs from students, parents and the public, has been published and shared with various state governments to expose NEET's anti-poor and anti-social justice nature. "DMK was the first to foresee the hazards of #NEET and undertook a large-scale campaign against it," Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president MK Stalin, saidIn its recommendations, the committee said "the State government may undertake immediate steps to eliminate NEET, as qualifying criteria for admission to medical programmes, by following the required legal and/or legislative procedures."

The government may take a stand that the words 'University education found in Entry 25 List III is a 'general provision and 'Regulation of Universities" in Entry II is a 'special' provision: Entry 32 is an exclusive State subject that cannot be ignored.

Admission to affiliated colleges under the Tamil Nadu Dr. MGR Medical University are governed by Act 3 of 2007 and hence admission to those seats will be filled as per the provisions of that Act. In this regard, the state may follow the required procedures to satisfy the legal and constitutional provisions, it said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Close aide kills 90-year-old pointiff in Mysuru

MYSURU, 10 JUNE

A 90-year-old pontiff at Annadaneshwar Mutt in Mysuru was killed by his close aide. The accused Ravi, 60, was arrested and an investigation is underway. Reportedly, Ravi was working closely with the victim Sivananda Swamiji. Ravi was allegedly inebriated while he committed the murder. The Swamiji was attacked with a grass cutting sickle in the premises of the monastery. The Mutt has been embroiled in controversies over its ownership since it was donated by the kings of Mysore. Swamiji had allegedly distributed parts of the land to his relatives, which led to legal disputes. In 2011, a case was filed against Swamiji for alleged fraud and sexual assault by a couple, who claimed they were cheated out of money for providing land *—Salar News*

1st year medico kills self in Bowring Hospital

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

A first-year medical student was found dead by hanging in his hostel room at Bowring Hospital in Shivajinagar on Monday. The student's identity has not been released. According to police reports, the student attended a practical examination on Monday morning and returned to his hostel room in the afternoon. He then locked himself inside. The reason for the suicide is unknown at this time. Police were called to the scene at the hostel located on the grounds of Bowring Hospital. If you are experiencing suicidal thoughts or require emotional support, please contact Tele Manas at 14416, the State government's health helpline Arogya Sahayavani (104), SAHAI (080 25497777), and Sa-Mudra Yuva Helpline (9880396331). *—PTI*

2 killed, 1 injured as tree falls on bike in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, 10 JUNE

Two young men have died and another is injured after a massive tree fell on their motorbike while riding near Belagundi village in Belagavi. The incident occurred on Sunday. The three friends, Somnath Muchandikar, 21, from Kurle village; Vitthal Talwar, 20; and Swapnil Desai, were rushed to the hospital for treatment after the tree crashed onto their bike. Muchandikar succumbed to his injuries due to alleged lack of immediate medical care. Vitthal Talwar also died on Sunday night. Desai remains hospitalised for treatment of serious injuries. The Belagavi Rural Police have registered a case.. *—Salar News*

K'taka bizwoman takes part in PM's swearing-in

CHAMARAJANAGAR, 10 JUNE

Varsha, a woman who runs a handicraft business in Ummattur in Chamarajanagar, participated in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing-in ceremony at in Rashtrapathi Bhavan, on Sunday. Varsha was inspired by Modi's Mann Ki Baat and started a craft industry. She makes decorative items using waste materials of banana stem fiber. She provides employment to many woman and leads a self-sufficient life. Modi appreciated Varsha on 27 November, 2023 on a monthly Maan Ki Baat programme on Akashvani. Varsha operates a small-scale eco-friendly enterprise named Aakruthi Eco-Friendly Enterprises. She utilises local materials, ito craft a diverse range of handicrafts, such as carpets, belts, mats, bags, yoga mats and table mats. *—Salar News*

Cong on 'fact-finding mission' after LS poll loss

DKS terms LS election outcome as a 'warning bell'

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Terming Lok Sabha election outcome as a "warning bell" to Congress, State unit Chief DK Shivakumar on Monday indicated that the ruling outfit is currently on a fact-finding mission to find out the reasons for the below par performance.

Also the Deputy Chief Minister, he stressed on the need to look at what went wrong and rectify them, as he called upon party men not to speak before the media regarding the party's performance and blaming someone for it.

NDA got 19 out of 28 seats, with BJP winning 17 and JD(S) two. Congress, which banked heavily on the guarantee schemes that its government had launched and expected them to yield rich electoral dividends, has won nine seats.

> When Congress leader Rahul Gandhi came to Bengaluru, he told us we will call for meetings and discussions
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Deputy CM

"When Congress leader Rahul Gandhi came to Bengaluru, he told us we will call for meetings and discussions," Shivakumar told reporters here.

"People have given us a warning bell. We need to be careful in the future. At least now we have to realise what has gone wrong, where and we should rectify it," Shivakumar said.

Claiming that the party was confident about winning 14-15 seats, Shivakumar said, "We have failed in it. People have given their verdict."

The party has not got votes on the home turf of several of its leaders, he said. "We are verifying why it happened. There may be several individual causes."

Shivakumar said no one has complained to him blaming other party leaders for the lower-than-expected performance.

"There is no use in it. Those who had taken responsibility for their respective area must answer for the performance there. They should speak to workers as to what went wrong and what is the solution," he added. *—PTI*

NDA does not want Dalit MPs: HM

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Home Minister and senior Congress leader G Parameshwara on Monday took a dig at the NDA for not inducting any MP from backward classes and Dalits from the State into the Union Council of Ministers.

He said it was evident that these communities have been "neglected" in the government formation exercise.

"It looks like they (BJP/NDA) don't want backward classes and Dalit communities," Parameshwara told reporters here.

Five MPs from State were part of the council of Ministers of the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sworn in on Sunday.

Nirmala Sitharaman (representing Rajya Sabha) and Pralhad Joshi of BJP and JD(S)' HD Kumaraswamy were sworn in as Cabinet Ministers, while BJP's Shobha Karandlaje was inducted as Minister of State along with V Somanna.

While Sitharaman and Joshi are Brahmins, Kumaraswamy and Karandlaje are Vokkaligas. Somanna hails from Lingayats.

Congratulating the five MPs who have become Ministers,

PHOTO: PTI

Parameshwara said there are several State issues pending for resolution before the Centre, such as GST share and irrigation projects requiring its nod.

"I'm confident that as the representatives of the state they will take them up on priority and try to resolve them," he said, adding that in case they fail, it is a set back to them and their party.

"We will wait and watch....if our issues are not resolved, naturally we will have to blame them."

On whether there were discussions in Congress about appointing more deputy chief ministers on the basis of communities, Parameshwara said: "There is no such thing, no such discussions have happened. Just because someone speaks it cannot be a party issue." *—PTI*

SC refuses to quash murder case against Vinay Kulkarni

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Supreme Court on Monday refused to quash charges framed by a special court against former minister Vinay Kulkarni in the murder of BJP worker Yogesh Gowda in Dharwad in 2016.

A vacation bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and Augustine George Masih refused to interfere with High Court order.

Senior advocate Siddhartha Dave, appearing for Kulkarni, submitted that the MLA has been named only in the second chargesheet filed by CBI and that the statement of the deceased's widow doesn't disclose his name.

"You obviously bought over the widow. SLP dismissed," the bench said.

"This trying your luck at Supreme Court then back out, this court has become a gambling court or what?" the bench said.

High Court on 8 April refused to interfere with the charges framed by a special court against Kulkarni and asked the special court to accomplish the trial and dispose of the criminal case against him preferably within three months.

High Court said the charges framed by the special court set up exclusively to deal with criminal cases against former and present MPs and MLAs show that due process was undertaken by the judge of the special court.

Gowda, a BJP zila panchayat member, was murdered on 15 June, 2016, at Dharwad.

In September 2019, the State handed over an investigation into the case to CBI. In November 2020, the agency arrested Kulkarni after questioning him.

CBI has alleged that the accused had personal enmity and political rivalry with Gowda who rejected their offer to withdraw from the zila panchayat elections in 2016. *—PTI*

Court sends Prajwal to 14 days judicial custody in sex scandal

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

A court on Monday sent former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual abuse against several women, to 14 days judicial custody.

He was produced before the 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) court as his Special Investigation Team (SIT) custody ended today.

The court on 31 May remanded him to SIT custody till 6 June, and later extended it till 10 June.

While in their custody, SIT conducted a detailed investigation, including gathering evidence and interviewing witnesses, and questioned Prajwal extensively about the allegations.

The court, taking into consideration the gravity of the allegations and the evidence presented by the SIT, decided to remand him to judicial custody for 14 days, till 24 June.

Suspended JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna being brought to a City court over his alleged sexual harassment of several women PHOTO: PTI

The 33-year-old grandson of JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda had failed in his bid to retain the Hassan. SIT officials arrested Revanna soon after he landed at Kempegowda International Airport from Germany on 31 May.

He had left for Germany on 27 April, a day after Hassan went to the polls. A 'Blue Corner Notice' seeking information on his whereabouts had earlier been issued by the Interpol, following a request by the SIT via the Central Bureau of Investigation.

A Special Court for Elected Representatives issued an arrest warrant against him on 18 May, following an application moved by the SIT. *—PTI*

ISRO's Aditya-L1 captures solar fury

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

ISRO's Aditya-L1 spacecraft's two onboard remote sensing instruments have captured the recent solar fury, the space agency said on Monday.

India's maiden solar mission Aditya-L1 reached the Lagrangian point (L1) on January six this year, 127 days after it was launched on 2 September, 2023. L1 is located roughly 1.5 million km from Earth and enables the spacecraft to view the Sun continuously.

The Solar Ultra Violet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) and the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) have captured the dynamic activities of the Sun during May 2024, ISRO said in a statement.

Aditya-L1 reached the L1 on Janurary PHOTO: X@MOGAMBOKHUSHHU

The Active region AR13664 on the Sun, during its passage during the week of May 8-15, erupted several X-class and M-class flares, which were associated with CMEs during May 8 and 9. These produced a major geomagnetic storm on May 11, it was stated.

ISRO released the Sun images acquired by the SUIT payload on 17 May, and also shared details of the observations made by VELC. *—PTI*

City gets new metered autorickshaw app

Bengaluru, 10 June

The City gets another union-backed autorickshaw app following the success of Namma Yatri. The Karnataka Rajya Chalakara Parishath, in collaboration with Agnibhu Technologies, launched the 'Nagara Metered Auto' app on Monday With this new app, users can book rides and pay government-fixed fares of Rs 30 for the first two kilometres and Rs 15 for each subsequent kilometre, as displayed on the meter. This initiative comes in response to the union's opposition to bike taxis and the high commissions charged by ride-hailing giants like Ola and Uber. App allows drivers to receive ride requests through various channels and initiate street-hailing trips using a unique QR code. *—Salar News*

IN DAKSHINA KANNADA

2 BJP supporters stabbed during NDA victory rally

MANGALURU, 10 JUNE

Two BJP cadres were stabbed, while another was allegedly thrashed as they were celebrating the swearing-in of the BJP-led NDA government by a group of youths in Dakshina Kannada, police said.

According to Mangaluru city police commissioner Anupam Agarwal, a group of revellers had shouted 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' as they passed along a road near a mosque on Sunday.

The youths who had gathered in front of the Boliyar Mosque in Bantwal taluk of Dakshina Kannada district objected to the slogans, but the revellers moved on. The youths followed them and targeted three people who had raised slogans and singled them out, chased them around and attacked them with knives, police said.

The injured are Harish Anchan, Nandakumar, and Krishnakumar. The former two were stabbed with knives while the latter was beaten up. All three have been hospitalised.

The police have arrested three persons, and further investigation is being conducted by the Bantwal Police.

Following the incident, district incharge Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao assured that strict action will be taken against the "aggressors" after the investigation is completed.

- According to Mangaluru city police commissioner Anupam Agarwal, a group of revellers had shouted 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' as they passed along a road near a mosque on Sunday

Police have recovered the knives that were used in the attack.

MLAs of Bantwal, and Mangaluru city South - Rajesh Nayak, and Vedavyas Kamath, respectively, have asked the police to arrest all the persons who have attacked Hindu youths.

Targeting the Congress, BJP in a post on 'X' said, "It feels like the Thuglak era is back in Karnataka, where shouting "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" is no longer safe. The growing hatred for Bharath under @siddaramaiah is deeply alarming." *—Salar News*

PHOTO: FB

Not contesting Channapatna bypolls: DK Suresh

RAMANAGARA, 10 JUNE

DK Suresh, the Congress leader who was defeated in the recent Lok Sabha elections from Bengaluru Rural, has denied the speculations about his candidacy in the Channapatna Assembly bypoll.

Addressing the media on Monday, Suresh stated that Congress will field a surprise candidate for the bypoll.

The bypoll in Channapatna was necessitated after JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy resigned as the MLA to contest Lok Sabha elections. Reflecting on his defeat in the Lok Sabha elections, Suresh expressed his acceptance of the outcome and his intention to continue working for the people.

"I have worked faithfully in the House as MP twice. I worked for the development of Ramanagara. I raised my voice against Kannadigas being taxed extra and faced criticism from the entire nation," he said.

"While asking for votes, I told people to consider my works. However, they rejected it. I accept that defeat. I will now work as a general worker under the leadership of Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah."

—Salar News

TO AVOID FINANCIAL LOSS

KSRTC urges State govt to raise bus fares

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) is urging the State government to raise bus fares due to a increase in operational costs, particularly diesel and spare parts.

The last fare hike was implemented in 2020, when diesel prices were at Rs 61 per liter. Currently, diesel costs Rs 90 per liter, representing a 50 per cent increase.

"This rise has impacted KSRTC's finances, with diesel accounting for 45 per cent of our revenue. The corporation's spending on diesel has risen from Rs 3 crore to Rs 5 crore," a KSRTC official said.

- The last fare hike was implemented in 2020, when diesel price was at Rs 61 per litre. Currently, diesel costs Rs 90 per litre

To address this issue, KSRTC is proposing a 25-30 per cent increase in bus fares. They argue that a fare hike is necessary to avoid financial losses, especially considering the recent 20 per cent salary hike for employees and the 46 per cent increase in diesel and spare parts costs.

A senior KSRTC official pointed out that the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) adjusts toll prices annually based on the Wholesale Price Index (WPI). KSRTC is advocating for a similar mechanism for bus fare adjustments.

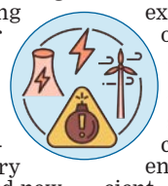
The corporation typically receives government grants to purchase new buses, increase salaries, and build bus stations. However, since the implementation of the Shakti scheme, these grants have stopped, leaving KSRTC dependent solely on their revenue generation.

The Transport Minister's office has denied receiving any official request from KSRTC regarding the fare hike proposal. *—Salar News*

No power crisis due to active planning: KJ George

BENGALURU, 10 JUNE

With its strategic use of renewable energy (RE) and non-renewable energy resources, Karnataka has managed to meet its growing energy demand during the peak summer months, said state Energy Minister KJ George on Monday.



Incidentally, the state's power consumption between February and May this year scaled new heights, the minister said at a press conference.

"The peak demand stood at 17,220 MW on 12 February. The highest average daily consumption in the state stood at 332 million units on 5 April, showcasing the state's commitment to a sustainable energy future," he added.

According to him, the state's success in managing the excess demand for power, owing to unprecedented heat waves, was possible through a combination of strategies such as increased generation capacity, renewable energy integration, efficient grid management, and demand-side management initiatives. It's a testament to the state's proactive approach to energy planning and infrastructure development. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Will always support NDA: Sikkim CM

GANGTOK, 10 JUNE

Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang on Monday asserted that his party SKM would continue supporting the NDA as the central government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has assisted in the development of the Himalayan state.

Tamang, the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) supremo, took oath as the chief minister of the Himalayan state for the second term at Paljor stadium during the day.

Speaking to PTI Video, Tamang said, "The priority of our government in this term would be BIPASHA (Bijli, Paan, Sadak, Swasthya, Siksha, Rojgar)."

He said his party won the assembly elections because of the development work done by his government despite facing severe challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic. *—PTI*

'Cong will suffer if opposing interests of Marathas'

JALNA, 10 JUNE

Quota activist Manoj Jarange on Monday claimed the Congress was speaking against the interests of the Maratha community and would face consequences in the Maharashtra assembly polls due later this year.

Speaking to reporters on the third day of his indefinite fast at Antarwali Sarathi village in Jalna, Jarange reiterated his demand for implementation of the draft notification that recognises Kunbis as "sage soyare" (blood relatives) of Maratha community members and sought a law to identify Kunbis as Marathas.

Newly-elected Congress MP from Jalna, Kalyan Kale, visited the village and met Jarange on Monday. Kunbi, a group, falls under Other Backward Class category, and Jarange has demanded Kunbi certificates be issued to all Marathas. *—PTI*

Malviya sues lawyer for ₹10 cr over defamation

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

BJP IT department head Amit Malviya has sent a legal notice to a Kolkata-based lawyer for Rs 10 crore for making "false and defamatory allegations" against him and demanded an apology for it. Congress, meanwhile, demanded at a press conference that BJP sack Malviya as the head of its IT department over what it claimed were allegations of "sexual exploitation". The Opposition party demanded an independent inquiry against Malviya. When contacted, Malviya made no direct comment on the allegations but referred to a legal notice he has sent to Santanu Sinha, who has made the allegations. *—PTI*

Delhi court to hear Rashid's interim bail plea

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

A Delhi court has fixed 18 June to hear arguments on an application filed by Engineer Rashid, arrested in a 2016 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case, seeking interim bail to take oath as an MP after the recently concluded general elections. Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated J-K former chief minister Omar Abdullah from the Baramulla constituency in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Rashid contested as an Independent candidate to defeat the National Conference (NC) vice president. NIA further submitted on 7 June that the notification for the oath of newly elected members of Parliament of Lok Sabha was not published yet. Rashid had moved the court seeking interim bail, or custody parole in the alternative, to take oath. *—PTI*

No Muslim MP 1st time since Independence

However, Parliament will see substantial Muslims, mostly sitting in the Opposition

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the first meeting of his new Cabinet, attended by the newly-inducted ministers in New Delhi PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

In a first for the country since Independent Indian history, the council of ministers, sworn in alongside Prime Minister Narender Modi, did not include a single representative from the Muslim minority community. This is the first time that no Muslim MP has been sworn into the Modi cabinet.

On 9 June, at 7.15 pm, BJP leader Narendra Modi made history by taking the oath as India's 15th Prime Minister, marking his third consecutive term in office. He is the first Prime Minister since Jawaharlal Nehru to lead the Union government for three consecutive terms.

The last Muslim MP in the Modi cabinet was Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, who was the Union minister for minorities. The seat has been vacant since Naqvi was not re-elected in the Rajya Sabha in 2022.

During Atal Bihari Vajpayee's term in 1999, there were two Muslim ministers – Shahnawaz Hussain and Omar Abdullah. In 1998, the Vajpayee-led ministry had Naqvi as minister of state.

This time, of the 71 that took oath apart from Modi, 30 of them are cabinet ministers, five will hold independent charges and 36 are to be ministers of state, none of them belonging to the Muslim community.

However, the Indian Parliament will see substantial Muslim representatives, mostly sitting in the Opposition. As many as 24 Muslim candidates have been elected as MPs including 21 from the INDIA bloc, one from AIMIM (Asaduddin Owaisi), and two independent MPs Abdul Rashid Sheikh or 'Engineer Rashid' and Mohmad Haneefa from J&K.

Likewise, there are no elected Sikh or Christian MPs. However, non-elected Sikhs and Christian MPs have found their way to Modi's cabinet – Ravneet Singh Bittu and George Kurien.

—Courtesy, Siasat

K Mohan Naidu youngest, Jitan Manjhi oldest in Cabinet

At 36, Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu is the youngest minister while 79-year-old Jitan Ram Manjhi is the oldest minister to be inducted in the 18th Lok Sabha. Naidu, Srikakulam MP from Telugu Desam Party, was sworn in as a minister of state (MoS) in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's new Council of Ministers. Manjhi was sworn in as a Union Cabinet Minister. *—PTI*

No change of guard in BJP's Kerala unit, says Surendran

NEW DELHI/T'PURAM, 10 JUNE

Kerala BJP President, K Surendran, on Monday dismissed reports that there would be a change of guard in the party unit of the southern state. He also dismissed as "fake news" the reports about actor-politician Suresh Gopi, who won the Thrissur Lok Sabha seat, allegedly expressing displeasure. *—PTI*

Guj's representation in Modi govt drops to 6

AHMEDABAD, 10 JUNE

The number of Gujarat MPs inducted into the third government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has come down to six compared to seven in the second term.

Amit Shah, Mansukh Mandaviya and S Jaishankar were sworn in as cabinet ministers for the second consecutive time on Sunday. The new entrants in the list from Gujarat are state BJP chief and Navsari MP CR Paatil, party president and Rajya Sabha member JP Nadda and Bhavnagar MP Nimuben Bambhaniya.

Shah and Mandaviya are Lok Sabha members, while Jaishankar is the Rajya Sabha member from Gujarat. Rajkot MP Parshottam Rupala, who was a minister in the previous government, has been dropped this time.

He was at the centre of a controversy over a remark which enraged the Khastriya/Rajput community during the Lok Sabha poll campaign.

A three-term Rajya Sabha member, Rupala had served as minister in both the previous Modi governments.

He was the Union Minister of State for agriculture, farmers welfare and panchayati raj between 2016 and 2021. *—PTI*

Not quitting cabinet, reports incorrect: Suresh

NEW DELHI/T'PURAM, 10 JUNE

Union Minister and actor-turned-politician Suresh Gopi on Monday dismissed as 'grossly incorrect' media reports suggesting that he was seeking an 'exit' from Narendra Modi-led government.

His statement came after his remarks to the media on Sunday night, expressing hope that he would soon be relieved of his post as he wants to do more films, sparking speculation about his continued role in the Modi-led government."A few media platforms are spreading the incorrect news that I am going to resign from the Council of Ministers of the Modi Government.This is grossly incorrect. It is a matter of pride for me to be in the Council of Ministers of the Modi Government and to represent the people of Kerala," Gopi said in the post.Attaching his photo with Modi on his FB page, Gopi said, "Under the leadership of Modi Ji, we are

PHOTO: PTI

> **Few media platforms are spreading the incorrect news that I am going to resign from the Council of Ministers**
>
> -Suresh Gopi (Union Minister)

committed to the development and prosperity of Kerala."Earlier, Congress's Kerala unit had posted a news channel video on 'X' containing Gopi's remarks.When reporters asked whether he chose the post of Minister of State (MoS) Gopi had said, "Nothing was demanded. I had told (them) that I don't want this. I feel that I will be relieved without delay." *—PTI*

OPPOSITION SLAMS SHINDE, AJIT OVER MINISTERIAL BERTHS

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

Leaders of the Maha Vikas Aghadi opposition alliance on Monday took potshots at CM Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar over their share in the new Union ministry led by PM Narendra Modi.

At the swearing in ceremony on Sunday, Prataprao Jadhav of the Shinde-led Shiv Sena was sworn in as MoS with independent charge, while the Ajit Pawar-led NCP declined a minister of state berth, insisting on a cabinet post.

Shiv Sena (UBT) spokesperson Sanjay Raut on Monday said the "minuscule" representation to the two parties in the Modi cabinet has proved that the BJP has shown them their place. "This is what you get when you decide to be someone's slaves," Raut told reporters.

Congress leader Vijay Wadettiwar said if the Ajit-led NCP doesn't accept the MoS post, they should forget any cabinet berth in future. *—PTI*

KANGANA SLAP ROW

CISF woman was angry over farmers' stir: Mann

CHANDIGARH, 10 JUNE

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said on Monday that CISF woman constable, who allegedly slapped actor Kangana Ranaut, might have been angry over BJP MP-elect's previous statements on the farmers' stir.

Mann also ticked off Kangana over her remarks on "terrorism". However, he said this incident should not have happened.

It was Punjab Chief Minister's first reaction to CISF woman constable Kulwinder Kaur allegedly slapping Kangana at the Chandigarh airport last week.

"Somewhere, there was anger in the heart of that woman (CISF constable). It (incident) should not have happened like this," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader said.

In an obvious reference to Kangana, Mann said whether one is a film actor or an MP, it is wrong to say that entire Punjab is a terrorist state and there is terrorism in the state.

"On every issue, you say that they are terrorists and separatists. If farmers hold protests, they are called terrorists. It is wrong," said Mann.

Kangana, in a video message hours after the incident last week, had said she was hit in the face and abused by the constable during a security check at the Chandigarh airport, the ugly fracas breaking out two days after she was elected to the Lok Sabha from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh. *—PTI*

Naidu faces fund crunch to deliver 'Super 6'

AMARAVATI, 10 JUNE

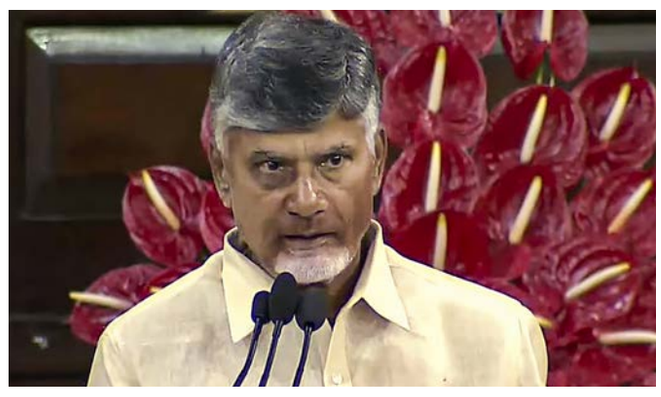
TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu who is set to take the reins of power in Andhra Pradesh shortly will have the daunting task of making bleak coffers ring to fulfil the "Super Six" that his party promised during the run-up to the recently concluded Assembly polls.

Naidu is scheduled to be sworn in as Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on 12 June. As a precursor to his journey of financial challenges, Naidu needs over Rs 4,500 crore to disburse social pensions to about 65 lakh beneficiaries by 1 July.As part of his "Super Six", Naidu promised to hike the monthly pension to Rs 4,000 from the existing Rs 3,000 along with a backlog of Rs 3,000 (Rs 1,000 for April, May and June) from July. All together it would cost the exchequer Rs 4,500 crore in July, besides salaries to employees and pensioners which is pegged at another Rs 6,000 crore. The new TDP government will have to mop up over Rs 10,000 crore to fulfill the financial requirements for July, a retired senior bureaucrat said. According to him, the state government has a committed expenditure of nearly Rs 1.30 lakh crore annually to meet the requirements of salaries, pensions, loan repayments and interests. According to the Reserve Bank website, the Andhra government offered to sell securities worth Rs 2,000 crore on June 11 through auction.

The state needs Rs 2,600 crore every month to meet the social pension alone. Similarly, as part of the manifesto, the Telugu Desam Party promised free travel to women in government-run buses.

An official of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation said the APSRTC earns about Rs 450 to Rs 500 crore through ticket revenue monthly and women passengers are expected to be in the range of 35-40 per cent.

With Naidu removing the cap on the number of beneficiaries, the amount may go up substantially. *—PTI*



TDP Supremo Chandrababu Naidu PHOTO: PTI

BOND ACROSS BORDERS

CPP Chairperson Sonia Gandhi hugs Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina, in New Delhi on Monday PHOTO: PTI

MAN CLAIMED TO BE TMC WORKER SHOT DEAD IN WB

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

A man, claimed to be a Trinamool Congress worker, was shot dead at Hariharpara in West Bengal's Murshidabad district, police said on Monday.

The mother of the deceased said his son Sanatan Ghosh was a TMC worker and claimed that the killing was related to a land-related tussle with some persons in the locality. The police are investigating whether there was any political connection or personal enmity over land ownership that caused the murder, an officer said. Ghosh, in his 30s, was riding a bike with two others on Sunday night when a car, waiting for him, rammed into the two-wheeler.He was shot from close range by the car-borne assailants after he fell from the bike. *—PTI*

SUVENDU MOVES HC OVER POLL VIOLENCE

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

Leader of Opposition in West Bengal Assembly Suvendu Adhikari on Monday moved the Calcutta High Court, claiming that numerous incidents of post-poll violence were taking place in the state following the Lok Sabha elections.

A division bench presided by Chief Justice TS Sivagnanam said the court will take up the BJP leader's petition for hearing on Wednesday.Adhikari's lawyer BillwadalBhattacharya stated before the bench, also comprising Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya, that the petitioner was seeking an order for protection of the victims.

The court said another petition by lawyer Priyanka Tibrewal on the issue of alleged post-poll violence in West Bengal will also be taken up for hearing. *—PTI*

AMID CORRUPTION CHARGES

Liquor policy: UDF leaves Kerala Assembly

T'PURAM, 10 JUNE

The Kerala Assembly, convened on Monday, witnessed a heated exchange between the ruling and opposition parties regarding the ongoing liquor policy controversy that has plagued the Left government for several weeks.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan rejected the opposition's demand in the Assembly to register a case under the Prevention of Corruption Act into the allegations with regard to the "amendment" of the state's liquor policy, which met here for the first time after the Lok Sabha polls.

The members of the opposition UDF raised placards and a banner criticising the CPI(M)-led government over the allegations, then boycotted the House proceedings,

PHOTO: PTI

- The members of the opposition UDF raised placards and a banner criticising the CPI(M)-led government over the allegations, then boycotted the proceedings

They later demanded that a case be registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act and called for the resignation of the Tourism and Excise Ministers in connection with the controversy.

For over a month, the Congress has been raising corruption charges against the Pinarayi Vijayan government over its liquor policy, alleging that it was planning to amend it by accepting bribes from bar owners.They raised the issue in the House on the first day of the session during zero hour and demanded a discussion on the raging row.

However, Excise Minister MB Rajesh dismissed the charges, stating that not even an initial discussion had been carried out regarding the amendment of the liquor policy.

He maintained that the recent department secretaries' meeting convened by the Chief Secretary and the stakeholders' meeting called by the Tourism Director had nothing to do with the liquor policy amendment, as alleged by the UDF. He also said the opposition has been raising baseless charges against the government for over a month, citing a policy about which the government has yet to launch an initial action. *—PTI*

'FUNDS GIVEN TO FARMERS WAS DUE MONTH AGO, PM DIDN'T DO ANY FAVOUR'

KOLKATA, 10 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi did no special favour to farmers by releasing PM-Kisan Samman Nidhi fund, which was due to them a month ago but delayed by the poll code, Congress said on Monday.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the release of the 17th instalment of funds, which Modi is touting as the first decision of his new government, is the legitimate entitlement due to farmers, according to the policy of his government.

If he is genuinely concerned about farmers, Modi should grant legal status to minimum support price (MSP) for their produce, announce a farm loan waiver and provide guaranteed insurance payment directly into their bank accounts, he said. *—PTI*

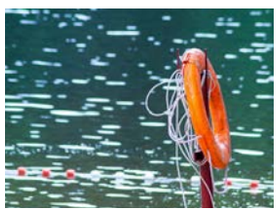


PHOTO: PIXABAY

Four of family drown in UP's Ghaghra river

LAKHIMPUR KHERI, 10 JUNE

Four members of a family drowned while another was injured after getting caught in the deep waters of the Ghaghra river near the Teliyar village of this Uttar Pradesh district, police said on Monday. Deputy Superintendent of Police Nighasan Pradeep told reporters that the victims are Teliyar residents Sushila,52, Satyam,24, Urvashi,17, and Kanha,10. Another member of the family, identified as Naini, was rescued and rushed to the district hospital in a critical condition, he said. The victims were caught in the river's deep waters, leading to the tragedy early on Monday, the police said. *—PTI*

Heroin packet recovered near border in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, 10 JUNE

A drone and a packet of heroin were seized from the outskirts of a village near the India-Pakistan border in Punjab's Amritsar, a BSF spokesperson said on Monday. The Border Security Force (BSF) intercepted the drone when it entered Indian territory from Pakistan late on Sunday, the spokesperson said. During a search operation, the BSF troops seized the China-made drone and a packet of heroin weighing 530 grams on the outskirts of Rattankhurd village. The packet was wrapped in yellow adhesive tape, with a small LED light attached to it, the spokesperson said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Actor Noor Malabika kills self in her Mumbai flat

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

Bollywood actor Noor Malabika Das, who starred in a 2023 web series 'The Trail', allegedly committed suicide at her flat in Oshiwara here, police said on Monday. The decomposed body of the 31-year-old actor was found on Friday evening after neighbours complained of a foul smell emanating from her apartment, an official said. Das was Bollywood actor Kajol's co-star in the 2023 web series 'The Trial.'Investigations have revealed that the actor hanged herself from the ceiling fan in her flat on Tuesday evening, and a neighbour informed the police about the foul smell, he said.The police team broke down the door and discovered the body and found a table and rope at the scene, the official said. Das suffered from depression and was on medication, he said. *—PTI*

Chemist found dead with his throat slit in Kathua

KATHUA/JAMMU, 10 JUNE

A 35-year-old chemist was found dead with his throat slit open near his house in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said on Monday. Amarjit Sharma's murder sparked protests by his grieving relatives and neighbours, who demanded immediate arrest of the unidentified culprits, they said. Sharma was found dead outside his house in Mela village by his family late Sunday night after they started searching for him when he did not return home, the officials said. Hundreds of people, carrying Sharma's body, blocked Jammu-Pathankot highway and the nearby railway track in Hiranagar area around 9am the officials said. *—PTI*

J&K terror attack: 4 of family from Jaipur among 10 dead

Rs 10 L to be given to kin of deceased; Rs 50,000 to injured

JAIPUR, 10 JUNE

Four members of a family, including a two-year-old boy, from Jaipur district were among the nine victims of the deadly terror attack on a bus carrying pilgrims in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district.

Terrorists opened fire at the bus carrying pilgrims in Reasi district around 6.10pm on Sunday, killing nine and injuring several. The 53-seater bus, on its way from the Shiv Khori temple to Katra, veered off the road following the barrage of gunfire and fell into a deep gorge near the Teryath village of the Poni area.

Jammu and Kashmir (J-K) Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday announced an ex-gratia amounting to Rs 10 each for the next of kin of deceased and Rs 50,000 each to the injured in Reasi terror attack

Deputy Commissioner of Police (west) Amit Kumar said Rajendra Saini,42, his wife Mamta Saini,40, their relative Pooja Saini,30, and her two-year-old son Titu were killed in the incident. Pooja's husband Pavan,32, has been injured, the police officer said.

According to the police, Rajendra Saini and his wife Mamta were residents of the Panchyawali Dhani area in Chomu town while Mamta was a resident of Ajmera ki Dhani in Murlipura police station area in Jaipur.

Rajendra used to run a cloth shop in Chomu and Pavan has an e-Mitra shop in Ajmera ki Dhani, SHO of Murlipura police station Sunil Kumar said.

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha meets the injured pilgrims at a hospital on Sunday evening, in Katra PHOTO: PTI

A massive cordon and search operation is underway to track down terrorists responsible for the attack on a passenger bus in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district that left nine people dead and 41 injured, officials said on Monday.The National Investigation Agency (NIA), State Investigation Agency (SIA) and Forensic department teams visited the spot of the terror attack and initiated a probe, they said.

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha visited injured passengers at GMC and Narayana hospitals on Monday and said the terrorist attack was part of a nefarious design to spread turmoil in the Jammu region. Such attempts would be thwarted, he asserted. *—PTI/ANI*

Don't use Salman's name: HC on plea over death of accused

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

The Bombay High Court on Monday ordered for the removal of actor Salman Khan's name as respondent in a plea seeking a CBI probe into the custodial death of an accused in a case of firing outside the actor's house.

Accused Anuj Thapan was found dead on 1 May inside the toilet of the crime branch police lock-up here.

A division bench of Justices Revati Mohite-Dere and Shyam Chandak directed petitioner Rita Devi, mother of Thapan, to delete Khan's name from the petition.

"Delete his name. Petitioner seeks leave to amend the petition to delete the name of respondent 4 (Salman Khan) as there is no pleading against him and no relief sought against him," the court said.

On 14 April, two motorbike-borne people opened fire outside Bollywood superstar Salman Khan's residence in Bandra area here.

Anuj Thapan, an accused in Salman Khan house firing case, killed himself in the lock-up PHOTO: PTI

The alleged shooters - Vicky Gupta and Sagar Pal - were later arrested from Gujarat.

Thapan was arrested on 26 April from Punjab along with another person for allegedly supplying weapons to the shooters for firing at Khan's residence.

While police claim Thapan killed himself, Rita Devi in her petition filed on 3 May in the High Court alleged foul play and claimed he was killed.

In her plea, she sought the High Court to direct the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to conduct a probe into her son's death.

The petition said Thapan was physically assaulted and tortured by police in custody.

Rita Devi had in her plea impleaded Khan as a respondent.The High Court on Monday said no averments or relief was sought against Khan in the petition and hence there was no point in keeping the actor involved in the plea. *—PTI*

DELHI POLICE'S POST ON T20 CUP LEAVES NETIZENS IN SPLITS

MUMBAI, 6 JUNE

A witty post by Delhi Police on social media platform X soon after the blockbuster India-Pakistan clash in the T20 World Cup in New York had netizens smiling as the Indian cricket team beat its archrivals in a low-scoring nailbiter match.

Tagging the New York Police Department (NYPD), the Delhi Police posted, "Hey, @NYPDnews We heard two loud noises. One is 'Indiaaa..India!', and another is probably of broken televisions. Can you please confirm?"The post went viral almost immediately and was met with laughter and appreciation from netizens.

It was reposted by over 7,000 people, reached over nine lakh views, was liked by over 43,000 people, and had more than 1,000 comments.

The India-Pakistan cricket rivalry, one of the most intense in the sporting world. *—PTI*

Look forward to India, Maldives working together: EAM

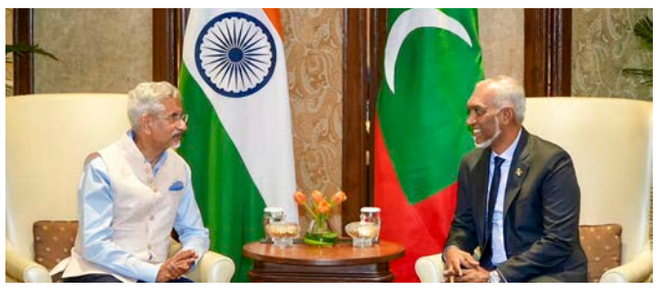
NEW DELHI, 6 JUNE

Union Minister S Jaishankar on Monday held separate bilateral meetings with Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Jaishankar also called on Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth, Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay and Seychelles Vice President Ahmed Afif.

The seven leaders from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region were in Delhi to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union Council of Ministers on Sunday.

"Delighted to call on President Dr Mohamed Muizzu of Maldives today in New Delhi. Look forward to India and Maldives working together closely," Jaishankar said on 'X'.



Union Cabinet Minister S Jaishankar with President of Maldives Mohamed Muizzu in New Delhi on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Jaishankar was the external affairs minister in Modi's previous Cabinet. He took oath as a Union minister on Sunday.

It was Muizzu's first visit to India after he became the island nation's president on November 17 last year. The ties between India and the Maldives came under severe strain since Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, took charge of the top office.

Within hours of his oath, he had demanded the withdrawal of Indian military personnel from his country. The Indian military personnel were replaced by civilians earlier this month.

After his meeting with Hasina, Jaishankar said, "Honoured to call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh today. The India-Bangladesh Maitri continues to advance."

On his meeting with Wickremesinghe, Jaishankar said, "Appreciate President Ranil Wickremesinghe of Sri Lanka for receiving me this morning in New Delhi. Recognized the steady progress in India-Sri Lanka relations."

"Great to meet PM Tshering Tobgay of Bhutan. Spoke about our unique and multi-faceted friendship," Jaishankar said on the meeting with Tobgay.

He said the meeting with Mauritius Prime Minister Jugnauth, reflected the special bond between the two countries. *—PTI*

'RECTIFY PLEA'

SC raps Delhi for water crisis: Don't take us for granted

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Do not take us for granted, the Supreme Court on Monday said, slamming the Delhi government for not rectifying defects in its plea seeking a direction to Haryana to release the surplus water provided by Himachal Pradesh to the national capital to mitigate its water crisis.

A vacation bench of Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra and Justice Prasanna B Varale noted that affidavits are not being accepted in the registry due to the defect in the petition filed by the Delhi government.

"Why have you not cured the defect? We will dismiss the petition. On the last date also this was pointed out and you did not remove the defect. Don't take the court proceedings for granted, however important your case may be," the bench said while adjourning the matter to 12 June.

The top court said it wants to read the files before the matter is heard as there are so many things being reported in the newspaper.

"If we don't read the files at our residential office we will be impressed by whatever the newspapers are reporting. That is not good for any of the parties," the bench said.

PHOTO: ANI

At the outset, senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for Haryana, submitted the reply filed by the state government. The apex court asked Divan why did he file the reply now.

Divan replied that since the defects in the Delhi government's plea have not been rectified, pre-filing of the reply was not permitted by the registry.

The top court then rebuked the Delhi government. The counsel for the Delhi government submitted that defects have been removed.

The acute shortage of drinking water has become an "existential problem" in Delhi, the top court had earlier observed and directed the Himachal Pradesh government to release 137 cusecs of surplus water to the national capital on Friday and Haryana to facilitate its flow. *—PTI*

2021 R'than paper leak: SP's husband held

JAIPUR, 10 JUNE

- Officials claim that Kaler was active in paper leaks and facilitating cheating in competitive exams using Bluetooth-enabled devices since his termination from service

The Rajasthan Police's special operations group has arrested the husband of an additional superintendent of police in connection with the 2021 sub-inspector recruitment paper leak case, officials said on Monday.

Tulsaram Kaler,57, a former sub-inspector of police whose service was terminated in 1993, was arrested from the Jaisinghpura area here on Sunday, they said.

"The accused is a kingpin in facilitating unfair means in various recruitment exams, including the sub-inspector recruitment test. He is being interrogated," ADG (ATS & SOG) VK Singh said.

Officials claim that Kaler was active in paper leaks and facilitating cheating in competitive exams using Bluetooth-enabled devices since his termination from service.

Kaler was selected as a police sub-inspector in 1991 but was arrested and terminated from service in 1993 for looting hawala money while being posted in Deedwana, Nagaur, police officials said.

According to them, in 1995, Kaler opened a coaching institute named Chanakya in Jodhpur and shifted to Bikaner in 2006 after marrying Namita Khokhar, a grade-III teacher.

Presently Khokar is working as an additional SP at the Rajasthan police headquarters. *—PTI*

Officials claim that the accused was active in paper leaks and facilitating cheating in competitive exams PHOTO: PTI

2 die in lightning strikes as rains lash Marathwada

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR, 10 JUNE

As many as 51 administrative circles in Marathwada have received heavy rainfall, and two persons have died due to lightning strikes in the last couple of days, an official said on Monday.

As per a report shared by the revenue department, the drought-prone region has received 63.8 mm rain since 1June, with Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar receiving 103.1 mm showers.

The Chitte Pimpalgaon circle of Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar recorded the highest 150.50 mm of rain on June 6, the report stated.

Of 51 circles that received heavy rains, 37 are in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, eight in Jalna, four in Beed, and one each in Parbhani and Hingoli, it stated.

A man and a 13-year-old boy were killed in lightning strikes in Nanded and Beed, respectively, in the last couple of days, the official said.

With this, the toll in rain-related incidents has risen to 10 in the region since June 1, he added.

PHOTO: PTI

- Of 51 circles that received heavy rains, 37 are in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, eight in Jalna, four in Beed, and one each in Parbhani and Hingoli, it stated. A man and a 13-year-old boy were killed in lightning strikes in Nanded and Beed

Marathwada, comprising Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Beed, Dharashiv, Latur, Parbhani, Hingoli and Nanded districts, was facing drought, as storage in five major reservoirs in the region had gone down to zero per cent. *—PTI*

MERCURY RISING

NW and East up for another heat spell

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Northwest and East India are in for another spell of extreme heat, with temperatures predicted to rise by two to three degrees over the next five days, the India Meteorological Department said on Monday.

India experienced multiple intense and prolonged heat waves in April and May which tested the limits of human endurance and the country's disaster preparedness, as many states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha, reported heat wave-related deaths.

"Heat wave to severe heat wave conditions (are) likely over northwest and east India during the next five days," the IMD said in a statement.

The heat wave is likely to impact parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Odisha and Gangetic West Bengal, the Met office said.

Experts say the extreme heat is a result of the naturally occurring El Nino phenomenon -- unusual warming of the ocean surface in the central and eastern tropical Pacific Ocean -- and the rapidly increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.Studies show that rapid urbanisation has worsened the warming in urban areas, with outdoor workers and low-income households bearing the maximum impact.

A driver splashes water on his face to get relief from the scorching heat on a hot summer day, in Kolkata, on Monday PHOTO: PTI

The heatwave in May saw several places across the country, including the hills of Assam, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh, recording all-time high temperatures. The mercury breached 50 degrees Celsius in Rajasthan and neared this mark in Delhi and Haryana.

Similar heatwaves could occur once every 30 years and these have already become about 45 times more likely due to climate change, 'World Weather Attribution', a group of leading climate scientists said last month.

According to the Central Water Commission, water storage in 150 major reservoirs in India dropped to just 22 per cent of their live storage this week, exacerbating water shortages in many states and significantly affecting hydropower generation.

The intense heat has already driven India's power demand to a record 246 gigawatts, with air conditioners and coolers in homes and offices running at full capacity.

India recorded nearly 25,000 suspected heat stroke cases and 56 deaths due to heat-related illnesses from March to May, PTI reported earlier, citing data from the health ministry.

According to data compiled by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), 46 of these deaths were recorded in May alone (till 30 May). Between 1 and 30 May, 19,189 suspected heat stroke cases were reported in the country.

The data does not include deaths from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Delhi, and could just be the tip of the iceberg, officials said on condition of anonymity. *—PTI*

ISRAELI MILITARY RAID

Smoke rises in the Palestinians Al Fara'a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank following an Israeli military raid, on Monday. Israel's military killed a 15-year-old Palestinian in an overnight raid on Al Fara'a refugee camp in the occupied West Bank. The military started what it described as a "counterterrorism" raid into the camp. It said soldiers killed one militant and injured two more with live fire and said the heavy exchanges of gunfire were ongoing
PHOTO: PTI

Caste politics paved way for Opposition's success

LOK SABHA POLLS 2024

Caste presented a dilemma for Modi's Hindu nationalist politics, which valorises upper-caste Hindu practices and behaviours while relying on support from the lower caste majority to win elections ***PHOTO: DTE***

This year's general election in India arguably brought up more questions about the fairness of the electoral process than any other in the country's history.

For example, in December, a bill was passed in India's parliament that allowed election commissioners to be appointed by a panel dominated by the executive branch, which many feared would endanger free and fair elections.

And during the campaign, Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave a string of speeches that were widely seen as Islamophobic, in which he accused the Opposition Congress Party of favouring Muslims. The Election Commission failed to adequately enforce the Model Code of Conduct when it came to these comments.

Opposition chief ministers, Arvind Kejriwal of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Hemant Soren of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), meanwhile, were arrested on charges of corruption. Both parties claimed the charges were politically motivated.

One of the lessons from the election, however, is that even when there are questions about how free and fair a vote is, Opposition parties can dent the dominance of ruling parties.

In India's election, the opposition presented a united front and stuck to a consistent message reflecting specific issues of voter discontent.

Why caste politics were so important?

BJP did not perform as well as expected in the election, suffering major losses in its heartland northern Indian states. Modi began the six-week election campaign saying his party would win more than 400 seats. Ultimately, it was reduced to 240 seats, while the opposition Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) won 232 seats.

INDIA had a shaky start to the election. A founding member, the Janata Dal, joined Modi's coalition earlier this year. INDIA also failed to reach a seat-sharing agreement with another member, Trinamool Congress (TMC), although that party remained part of the alliance.

Yet, as the campaign wore on, BJP's attacks on the opposition led to a more united front, focusing particularly on the issue of caste.

Lalu Prasad Yadav, leader of Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) party, which is also part of the INDIA coalition, warned BJP intended to change the Constitution to end caste-based affirmative action. Though this was denied by Modi, the allegation seemed to strike a chord with voters.

Caste presented a dilemma for Modi's Hindu nationalist politics, which valorises upper-caste Hindu practices and behaviours, while relying on support from the lower caste majority to win elections.

BJP had sought to ameliorate this tension by promoting welfare schemes and accusing the secular opposition of colluding with Muslims to deprive the Hindu lower-caste poor.

In the lead-up to the election, Modi also claimed to have replaced traditional forms of caste stratification with four new castes of welfare "beneficiaries" – women, farmers, the youth and the poor.

In truth, however, the government's welfare schemes consisted of paltry cash transfers, small loans, food rations and subsidies for private goods like toilets, which sought to compensate for the stagnation of incomes and lack of jobs. Spending on health and education by Modi's government, which could have transformative effects on society, has languished.

Over the past decade – but particularly following the COVID pandemic – India has also become one of the world's most unequal countries. Women, Dalits, Adivasis and Muslims have fared the worst.

Dalit politicians also grew in prominence

Perhaps the biggest surprise for the BJP were its heavy losses in its heartland state, Uttar Pradesh.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) had previously dominated Uttar Pradesh politics by promoting the interests of particular lower caste "other backward classes". This tactic, however, generated resentment among other lower castes, which was exploited by the BJP to win power in 2017.

The future of democracy

Indian democracy is not out of the woods yet. Activists, students, political leaders and journalists remain imprisoned.

The Hindu nationalist movement also has a history of inciting communal violence when things do not go its way in the electoral arena.

The Modi government started to extend its media censorship during the election, as well.

There is little to suggest that Modi will temper what many see as authoritarian tendencies, but there is now more resistance, scepticism and alternatives that will hopefully aid democratic recovery.

—Courtesy Downtoearth

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

Will AI unfairly influence recruitments?

The artificial intelligence (AI) revolution has begun, spreading to almost every facet of people's professional and personal lives – including job recruitment.

While artists fear copyright breaches or simply being replaced, business and management are becoming increasingly aware to the possibilities of greater efficiencies in areas as diverse as supply chain management, customer service, product development and human resources (HR) management.

Soon all business areas and operations will be under pressure to adopt AI in some form or another. But the very nature of AI – and the data behind its processes and outputs – mean human biases being embedded in the technology.

Our research looked at the use of AI in recruitment and hiring – a field that has already widely adopted AI to automate the screening of résumés and to rate interviews by job applicants.

AI in recruitment promises greater objectivity and efficiency during the hiring process by eliminating human biases and enhancing fairness and consistency in decision making.

Magnifying human bias

Although one of the reasons for using AI in recruitment is that it is meant to be to be more objective and consistent, multiple studies have found the technology is, in fact, very likely to be biased. This happens because AI learns from the datasets used to train it. If the data is flawed, the AI will be too.

Biases in data can be made worse by the human-created algorithms supporting AI, which often contain human biases in their design.

In interviews with 22 HR professionals, we identified two common biases in hiring: "stereotype bias" and "similar-to-me bias".

Stereotype bias occurs when decisions are influenced by stereotypes about certain groups, such as preferring candidates of the same gender, leading to gender inequality.

"Similar-to-me" bias happens when recruiters favour candidates who share similar backgrounds or interests to them.

These biases, which can significantly affect the fairness of the hiring process, are embedded in the historical hiring data which are then used to train the AI systems. This leads to biased AI.

So, if past hiring practices favoured certain demographics, the AI will continue to do so. Mitigating these biases is challenging because algorithms can infer personal information based on hidden data from other correlated information.

Can humans help?

As well as HR professionals, we also interviewed 17 AI developers. We wanted to investigate how an AI recruitment system could be developed that would mitigate rather than exacerbate hiring bias.

Based on the interviews, we developed a model wherein HR professionals and AI programmers would go back and forth in exchanging information and questioning preconceptions as they examined data sets and developed algorithms.

However, our findings reveal the difficulty in implementing such a model lies in the educational, professional and demographic differences that exist between HR professionals and AI developers.

These differences impede effective communication, cooperation and even the ability to understand each other. While HR professionals are traditionally trained in people management and organisational behaviour, AI developers are skilled in data science.

Connecting HR and AI

If companies and the HR profession want to address the issue of bias in AI-based recruitment, several changes need to be made.

Firstly, the implementation of a structured training programme for HR professionals focused on information system development and AI is crucial. This training should cover the fundamentals of AI, the identification of biases in AI systems, and strategies for mitigating these biases.

Moreover, developing culturally relevant datasets is vital for reducing biases in AI systems. HR professionals and AI developers need to work together to ensure the data used in AI-driven recruitment processes are diverse and representative of different demographic groups. This will help create more equitable hiring practices.

Lastly, countries need guidelines and ethical standards for the use of AI in recruitment that can help build trust and ensure fairness. Organisations should implement policies that promote transparency and accountability in AI-driven decision-making processes.

By taking these steps, we can create a more inclusive and fair recruitment system that leverages the strengths of both HR and AI developers. *—The Conversation*

AI in recruitment promises greater objectivity and efficiency during the hiring process by eliminating human biases and enhancing fairness and consistency in decision making ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

India vs Pakistan helps cricket's American dream gather pace

From left to right: Hardik Pandya interacts with Mohammad Rizwan; Indian supporters celebrate the victory of India during ICC men's T20 world cup match in New York, on Sunday ***PHOTO: PTI***

New York is the concrete jungle where dreams are made. There really is nothing you can't do.

After a dazzling, dramatic and pulsating match between India and Pakistan that even includes, it seems, co-hosting a T20 World Cup.

This was the match. Not just any match, but THE match on which the success of the US leg of this jamboree effectively hung.

The International Cricket Council will be happy their American dream has become a reality even if the rain, at one point, threatened to make it a damp squib.

Fans got drenched before play started but most were not in the slightest bit bothered by the lack of cover in the open stands.

"Who cares about the weather? I'm going to see Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma and Jasprit Bumrah!" Arjun, who lives in New Jersey, excitedly said after the showers relented.

He was one of 34,028 who packed into a pop-up stadium, built at a cost of $32m. Regardless of whether this event turns a profit cricket's reawakening in the US looks set to gather pace.

The desire to be at India v Pakistan match was such that it could have been sold out several times over.

- After a dazzling, dramatic and pulsating match between India and Pakistan that even includes, it seems, co-hosting a T20 World Cup

Citi Field, the home of New York Mets baseball team, was opened for fans unable to get in Nassau County International Cricket Stadium to watch a game on the big screen.

No charge, but the MLB marketing men are not soft. Just as the ICC want its piece of the American pie, cricket's cousin is desperate to grab its slice of the South Asian market.

"The ticket prices were a little steep for this game but I guess it's supply versus demand," said Irfan, a Pakistan fan, who had done an overnight drive from Toronto to make the fixture.

He was one of the few who got lucky in the ballot.

Hafeez, a Pakistan fan from Coventry, sat with his five-month baby in a pram on the steps of the stand as he watched the action unfold in the middle having won tickets in a competition.

"You can see from the passion of the fans what cricket means," he said.

For the first time at this pop-up stadium in Eisenhower Park the plastic wrapping was also taken off the comfy seats in the corporate sections which were barely used for earlier games.

Cricket royalty was bussed in for the day. Sachin Tendulkar was mobbed, Bollywood stars hob-nobbed. Noble-prize winning activist Malala Yousafzai cheered on Pakistan.

Chris Gayle, who wore a dazzling all-white suit with one sleeve orange and green for India and the other green for Pakistan, strolled about the outfield with a huge grin on his face. He was even asking the players to sign it.

It was brash, over-bearing and full of razzamatazz. Even ringmaster Ravi Shastri's act at the toss was cranked up a few more notches.

There is an appeal for the players of India and Pakistan being here, too. Not just in terms of growing their own brands stateside.

Kohli and his Bollywood superstar wife Anushka Sharma were able to slip out for coffee in New York the past few days – almost unthinkable back home.

Security was extremely tight. Sniffer dogs, bomb disposal experts, military-style armoured vehicles, helicopters circling the ground, surveillance teams and members from every branch of police imaginable. Even covert snipers in place.

"The Super Bowl on steroids" was how Nassau County executive Bruce Blakeman, one of the key men in bringing this even to New York, described the security preparations for the event.

Everything's bigger in the US, after all.

So where from here? Major League Cricket will fill the breach given the cast of stellar names on their books, with this year's edition set to start a matter of days after the World Cup ends.

A delegation from the International Olympic Committee have been in town in recent days checking out the pop-up stadium in New York and meeting various stakeholders.

You can bet your bottom dollar India v Pakistan at Los Angeles 2028 is firmly in their sights.

It will be a case of watch this space to see what happens on US soil between now and then.

—BBC News

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Malaysia revamps: Diesel prices jump 56% in subsidies

KUALA LUMPUR, 10 JUNE

Diesel price in Malaysia jumped by more than 50 per cent on Monday as part of a revamp of decades-old fuel subsidies to tighten government spending and save billions of ringgits annually. The restructuring eliminates blanket energy subsidies and redirects them to the needy. They're part of economic reforms pledged by Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, whose government says they're needed to build and more sustainable economy and plug losses from smuggling cheap oil to neighbouring countries. Anwar has been cautious to bring about higher fuel prices, however, with working-class voters are still struggling with rising cost of living. He announced the decision to cut fuel subsidies last month to give time to lower-income groups to prepare for transition. *—AP*

Trump to undergo probation interview Monday

WASHINGTON, 10 JUNE

Former President Donald Trump is scheduled to be interviewed by New York probation officials Monday, a required step before his July sentencing in his criminal hush money case, according to three people familiar with the plan. Trump will do the interview via a computer video conference from his residence at the Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida, the people told Associated Press. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorised to disclose the plans publicly. One of Trump's lawyers, Todd Blanche, will be present for the interview. People convicted of crimes in New York usually meet with probation officials without their lawyers, but the judge in Trump's case, Juan Merchan, said in a letter Friday that he would allow Blanche's presence. *—PTI*

7 soldiers killed: Pak PM vows to 'eliminate terrorism'

ISLAMABAD, 10 JUNE

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday pledged to "relentlessly eliminate terrorism" from the country after seven soldiers, including a Captain, were killed in a terrorist attack in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province a day earlier. The incident occurred when the convoy of security personnel heading towards Kachi Qamar, Sarband Post of the Lakki Marwat district, came under attack by the terrorists. The terrorists blasted an improvised explosive device (IED) initially and later opened fire on the convoy. "Deeply saddened by the martyrdom of Pak Army personnel, including a Captain in a targeted attack in Lakki Marwat District," Sharif said in a post on X. *—PTI*

17-year-old girl lungs collapses after vaping

NEW YORK, 10 JUNE

A 17-year-old girl ended up losing part of her lung after she vaped the equivalent of 400 cigarettes a week. Kyla Blythe collapsed and 'turned blue' while she was at a sleepover at a friend's house on 11 May, having thought that her vaping habit was mostly 'harmless'. However, excessive vaping created and burst a small air blister on her lung, known as a pulmonary bleb. She almost went into cardiac arrest as a result, was rushed to hospital and spent five-and-a-half hours in surgery to remove part of her lung. The 17-year-old has since said she's sworn off the vapes after her serious health scare, saying she 'wouldn't go near them' now and she's been 'scared out of them' by being hospitalised for two weeks. She said: "When I was 15 it started becoming a popular thing. All my friends were doing it." ***—Courtesy, Ladbiblex***

MACRON DISSOLVES FRENCH PARLIAMENT

French Prez called for snap elections after defeat in EU vote

PARIS, 10 JUNE

French President Emmanuel Macron dissolved the lower house of France's parliament in a surprise announcement sending voters back to the polls in the coming weeks to choose lawmakers, after his party was handed a humbling defeat by the far-right in the European elections Sunday.

The legislative elections will take place in two rounds on 30 June and 7 July. The announcement came after the first projected results from France put the far-right National Rally party well ahead in the European Union's parliamentary elections, handing a chastening loss to Macron's pro-European centrists, according to French opinion poll institutes.

Marine Le Pen's anti-immigration, nationalist party was estimated to get around 31-32 per cent of the votes, a historic result more than double the share of Macron's Renaissance party, which was projected to reach around 15 per cent.

Macron himself wasn't a candidate in the EU elections and his term as president still runs for three more years. He said the decision was "serious" but showed his "confidence in our democracy, in letting the sovereign people have their say."

The legislative elections will take place in two rounds on 30 June and 7 July
PHOTO: AP/PTI

"In the next few days, I'll be saying what I think is the right direction for the nation. I've heard your message, your concerns, and I won't leave them unanswered," he said. In latest legislative elections in 2022, Macron's centrist party won the most seats but lost its majority at the National Assembly, forcing lawmakers into political manoeuvring to pass bills.

With Sunday's decision, he is taking a big risk with a move that could backfire and increase the chances of Le Pen to eventually take power. A scenario in which an opposition party would eventually win a parliament majority could lead to a fraught power-sharing situation called "cohabitation," with Macron to name a prime minister with different views.

Le Pen, who head the National Rally group at the National Assembly, "welcomed" Macron's move.

- The EU elections results were a hard blow for Macron, who has been advocating for Europe-wide efforts to defend Ukraine and the need for the EU to boost its own defences and industry

'We're ready for it," said Le Pen, who was the runner-up to Macron in the last two presidential elections.

The EU elections results were a hard blow for Macron, who has been advocating for Europe-wide efforts to defend Ukraine and the need for the EU to boost its own defences and industry.

The National Rally's lead candidate for the EU elections, Jordan Bardella, campaigned for limiting free movement of migrants by carrying out national border controls and dialling back EU climate rules. The party no longer wants to leave the EU and the euro, but aims to weaken it from within. *—AP*

TUEN NG FESTIVAL

Competitors take part in the annual dragon boat race to celebrate the Tuen Ng festival in Hong Kong on Monday
PHOTO: PTI

Ukraine says it struck Su-57 jet on ground at Russian air base

KYIV, 10 JUNE

Ukrainian forces have struck a latest-generation Russian Sukhoi Su-57 fighter jet at an airbase inside Russia, Kyiv's GUR defence intelligence agency said, sharing satellite pictures which it said confirmed the attack. In a Telegram post on Sunday, the GUR did not specify how the Su-57 was hit or by which unit of the Ukrainian military, the first such attack.In one photo, black soot marks and small craters could be seen dotting a concrete strip around the parked aircraft.

A popular Russian pro-war military blogger, who calls himself Fighterbomber and focuses on aviation, said the report of the strike on the Su-57 was correct and that it had been hit by a drone.

the GUR did not specify how the Su-57 was hit PHOTO: X/@DEFENCEU

The GUR said the aircraft was parked at the Akhtubinsk airfield, which it said was 589km from the front lines in Ukraine. "The pictures show that on 7 June, the Su-57 was standing intact, and on [June 8th], there were craters from the explosion and characteristic spots of fire caused by fire damage near it," the GUR said, posting the images alongside the message. *—PTI*

N Korea is installing its own loudspeakers: S Korea

SEOUL, 10 JUNE

South Korea's military on Monday said it's detecting signs that North Korea is installing its own loudspeakers along their heavily armed border, a day after the South blared anti-Pyongyang propaganda broadcasts over its speakers for the first time in years as the rivals engage in a Cold War-style psychological warfare.

The South's resumption of its loudspeaker broadcasts on Sunday was in retaliation for the North sending over 1,000 balloons filled with trash and manure over the last couple of weeks. North Korea has described its balloon campaign as a tit-for-tat against South Korean civilian groups flying anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets across the border. Pyongyang has long condemned it as it's extremely sensitive to any outside criticism of leader Kim Jong Un's authoritarian rule.

Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff didn't immediately comment on the number of suspected North Korean speakers or where along the border they were spotted being installed. It said the speakers were still silent as of Monday afternoon.

South Korea on Sunday activated its loudspeakers for an initial broadcast into North Korea, which reportedly included news, criticism about North Korea's government and South Korean pop music.

Hours later on Sunday, Kim's powerful sister warned that the South created a "prelude to a very dangerous situation". She said South Korea would witness an unspecified "new response" from the North if it continues with the broadcasts and fails to stop civilian activists from flying anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets across the border. *—AP*

ISRAEL-GAZA WAR

Israeli war cabinet minister quits emergency govt

Benjamin Netanyahu and Benny Gantz attemding a press conference on Monday PHOTO: WTXNEWS

TEL AVIV, 10 JUNE

Israeli war cabinet minister Benny Gantz has quit the emergency government in a sign of deepening divisions over Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's post-conflict plans for Gaza.

Speaking during a news conference in Tel Aviv on Sunday where he announced his resignation, Gantz said the decision was made with a "heavy heart". "Unfortunately, Netanyahu is preventing us from approaching true victory, which is the justification for the painful ongoing crisis," he said.

Considered by some to be a potential challenger for power in Israel, Gantz called on Netanyahu to set a date for elections. Netanyahu responded with a post on X: "Benny, this is not the time to quit the campaign, this is the time to join forces." Gantz is a political rival of Netanyahu and a former chief of staff of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

His centrist National Unity party was in opposition until 11 October 2023 when, after the start of the war following Hamas's 7 October attacks, he agreed to form an emergency government with Netanyahu.

National Unity holds five posts in the emergency government. Current opposition leader Yair Lapid backed Gantz's decision as "important and right" on social media. Immediately after the announcement, far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir demanded a place in the war cabinet.

- His centrist National Unity party was in opposition until 11 October 2023 when, after the start of the war following Hamas's 7 October attacks, he agreed to form an emergency government with Netanyahu

Ben-Gvir is part of a right-wing coalition that has threatened to quit and collapse the government if Israel accepts a ceasefire proposal put forward by US President Joe Biden. Gantz's influence in the government was widely seen as a counterbalance to that of far-right members of Netanyahu's coalition.

Last month, Gantz set a deadline of 8 June for Netanyahu to lay out how Israel would achieve its six "strategic goals", including the end of Hamas rule in Gaza and the establishment of a multinational civilian administration for the territory.

The prime minister dismissed the comments at the time as "washed-up words" that would mean "defeat for Israel".

—BBC News

INDIAN-ORIGIN MAN, 28, KILLED IN CANADA

OTTAWA, 10 JUNE

A 28-year-old Indian-origin man was shot dead in a suspected "targeted killing" in Canada's British Columbia province, according to the police, who have arrested and charged four people with first-degree murder in connection with the case.

The victim, identified as Yuvraj Goyal, was found dead by the police when they were responding to the call of a shooting in Surrey on Friday morning, the homicide unit of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police said in a statement.

Goyal worked at a car dealership in Surrey, Global News reported, quoting his sister, Charu Singhla. She said the family had no idea why he was killed and that they had no indication that he had any ties to organised crime.

Goyal's brother-in-law, Bawandeap, said the victim was on the phone with his mother, who lives in India, just before he was shot. "He came back from his gym, (his) daily routine, and he stepped out of his car, and he was shot," Bawandeap said.

Police arrested four suspects -- 23-year-old Manvir Basram of Surrey, 20-year-old Sahib Basra of Surrey, 23-year-old Harkirat Jhutty of Surrey, and 20-year-old Keilon Francois of Ontario -- shortly after the shooting. They have been charged with first-degree murder, CBC News quoted the police as saying. *—PTI*

Yuvraj Goyal PHOTO: X

Houthis strike 2 ships with missiles in Gulf of Aden: US

MANAMA, 10 JUNE

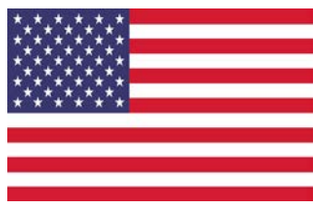


PHOTO: FREEPIK

Missile attacks by Yemen's Houthi rebels struck two ships in the Gulf of Aden, authorities said on Sunday, the latest assaults on shipping in the region.

One anti-ship ballistic cruise missile hit the Antigua- and Barbuda-flagged cargo ship Norderney forward station late Saturday, starting a fire that those on board put out, the US military's Central Command said. It added that a second anti-ship cruise missile also hit the Norderney.

The British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre similarly reported the attack and fire in the same area off Aden, saying "damage control is underway." Houthi military spokesman Brig Gen Yahya Saree claimed the attack in a prerecorded video message Sunday, saying the vessel had been targeted with both missiles and drones.

Tracking data analysed by The Associated Press showed the Norderney was still in the Gulf of Aden on Sunday afternoon. In a second attack, a Houthi ballistic missile hit the Tavvishi, a Liberian-flagged, Swiss-owned-and-operated container ship in the Gulf of Aden, Central Command.

- Houthi military spokesman Brig Gen Yahya Saree claimed the attack in a prerecorded video message Sunday, saying the vessel had been targeted with both missiles and drones

Saree claimed the attack happened in the Arabian Sea, but provided no evidence. Tracking data suggested the Tavvishi was in the Gulf of Aden at the time of the attack. *—AP*

RUSSIA SNUBBED

90 countries to attend Ukraine peace summit

BERN, 10 JUNE

Nearly 90 countries and organisations, half from Europe, have confirmed attending the Swiss-hosted Ukraine peace summit over the weekend despite Russia's refusal to participate in the conference, Switzerland's president said Monday.

Viola Amherd told reporters in the Swiss capital that the summit, on Saturday and Sunday, will aim to chart a path toward possible peace nearly 28 months after Russian forces invaded Ukraine and the war grinding on.

"This is not propaganda," said Amherd. "This is about the basis of humanitarian aid provided by Switzerland...and to initiate a dialogue." Swiss President added that most participants — about half of which will be represented at the level of head of state or government — are country leaders, but "a handful" are from organisations like the United Nations.

Viola Amherd told reporters in the Swiss capital that the summit, will aim to chart a path toward possible peace PHOTO: X/@MARIONAWFAL

Some, including French President Emmanuel Macron and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, are expected to attend the summit at the Buergenstock resort overlooking Lake Lucerne. About 160 invitations have been sent out and Amherd said it was not a "disappointment" for the Swiss government that fewer than 100 have so far announced participation in the first phase of the peace process.

Swiss authorities said the final list of participants was expected by Friday, but key developing countries like Turkey, South Africa and Brazil haven't indicated whether they would attend. India they said, will take part but it isn't clear at which level.

Brazil and China said they wouldn't take part unless both sides – including Russia – were at the table, according to Swiss officials. Beijing has been one of the top supporters of Russian President Vladimir Putin since the war started.

Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis also addressed reporters, saying Switzerland has repeatedly acknowledged that there cannot be a peace process without Russia. "The question is not whether Russia will be on board, the question is when." *—AP*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

Gold remains flat at ₹71,800; silver rises ₹200

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Gold prices remained flat at Rs 71,800 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday. According to Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, gold traded flat on Monday, after Comex spot gold declined as much as 3.45 per cent on Friday, the most since August 2021. However, silver prices rose Rs 200 to Rs 92,100 per kg. In the previous session, it had closed at Rs 91,900 per kg. "In the Delhi markets, spot gold prices (24 carats) are trading flat at Rs 71,800 per 10 grams, unchanged from the previous close," Gandhi said. In the overseas markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at USD 2,293 per ounce, down USD 1 from the previous close. However, silver was quoted higher at USD 29.50 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee falls 10P to close at 83.50 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

The rupee settled for the day lower by 10 paise at 83.50 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, following a rising American currency in overseas markets and a sluggish trend in domestic equities. Forex traders said the downside in the rupee was restricted by easing political uncertainties as Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister on Sunday for a record-equalling third term. At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened at 83.48 and settled for the day lower by 10 paise at 83.50 (provisional) against the American currency. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 105.27, higher by 0.37 per cent. *—PTI*

JSW Steel sales decline due to maintenance

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

JSW Steel reported a 4 per cent decline in its crude steel production in May at 20.98 lakh tonnes, the company informed in a release on Monday. The crude steel production was lower year-on-year mainly due to a planned maintenance shutdown for one of the Blast Furnaces at Dolvi, the company said. JSW Steel is the flagship business of the diversified USD 24 billion size JSW Group. JSW Group also has business in energy, infrastructure, cement, paints, sports, and venture capital. Since 2020, the Indian market for Zinc-Magnesium-Aluminium alloy coated steel has grown more than 6x from approximately 15,000 tonnes to approximately 120,000 tonne in 2023-24. *—ANI*

Passenger vehicle retail sales dip 1%: FADA

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Domestic passenger vehicle retail sales declined 1 per cent year-on-year in May, as blistering summer heat and elections impacted demand, automobile dealers' body FADA said on Monday. Passenger vehicle registrations dipped to 3,03,358 units last month, as compared with 3,35,123 units in May 2023. Due to the extreme heat, the number of walk-ins to showrooms dropped by around 18 per cent. Two-wheeler sales rose 2 per cent to 15,34,856 units in May, as against 14,97,778 units in the same month last year. Three-wheeler retails rose 20 per cent year-on-year to 98,265 units last month. While commercial vehicle sales witnessed an increase of 4 per cent at 83,059 units last month. FADA, represents over 15,000 automobile dealerships collated sales data from 1,360 RTO. *—PTI*

Markets settle lower after high record in early trade

Sensex came under selling pressure & ended at 203.28 points

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ended lower on Monday after hitting their all-time high levels in early trade amid selling in blue-chip IT stocks and HDFC Bank.

After breaching the 77,000-mark during the early trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex came under selling pressure at the fag-end of the session and ended 203.28 points or 0.27 per cent lower at 76,490.08. During the day, the benchmark jumped 385.68 points or 0.50 per cent to hit a new record of 77,079.04.

Halting its three-day rally, the NSE Nifty dipped 30.95 points or 0.13 per cent to settle at 23,259.20. Intra-day, it climbed 121.75 points or 0.52 per cent to hit the lifetime peak of 23,411.90.

Narendra Modi was sworn in as Prime Minister on Sunday for a record-equalling third term, heading a 72-member Union Council of Ministers that put emphasis on continuity, youth and experience, while also rewarding partners in BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government.

NSE Nifty dipped 30.95 points to settle at 23,259.20 PHOTO: FREEPIK

Among the 30 Sensex companies, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Wipro, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, HDFC Bank, HCL Technologies and Tata Consultancy Services were among the major laggards.

UltraTech Cement, Power Grid, Nestle, NTPC, Tata Steel and Axis Bank were among the biggest gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 4,391.02 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

"The Indian market currently lacks fresh catalysts following the formation of the new government at the centre, suggesting that some consolidation may occur in the near term. Institutional flows indicate a mixed trend, with FIIs gradually covering their shorts and DIIs booking profits after the market reached historic highs," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

BSE benchmark ended at 76,693.36, up 1,618.85 points or 2.16 per cent, on Friday. The Nifty settled with a jump of 468.75 points or 2.05 per cent at 23,290.15. *—PTI*

3.3 CR MPHASIS SHARES TRADED VIA OPEN MARKET

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

About 3.35 crore shares of Mphasis were sold through open market transactions on the NSE as part of a large block deal of over Rs 7,000 crore on Monday.

Shares of the information technology firm slumped 4.82 per cent to Rs 2,352.60 in the intra-day trade before recovering some ground to settle at Rs 2,398, about 3 per cent lower than its previous close.

Though buyers and sellers of the shares could not be ascertained, earlier reports had suggested that BCP Topco -- an affiliate of US-based investment firm BlackStone -- could be the seller.

A combined of 3.35 crore equity shares -- at an average price of Rs 2,379.75 apiece -- changed hands on NSE -- with the total deal value of over Rs 7,000 crore. *—PTI*

AFTERMATH OF RBI BAN

Paytm restructures, lays off employees

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Fintech firm One97 Communications, owner of Paytm brand, is laying off an undisclosed number of employees and claimed that it is providing outplacement support for their smooth transition, according to a company statement.

Paytm's sales employee headcount in March 2024 quarter dropped by about 3,500 to 36,521 personnel on a quarter-on-quarter basis, mainly due the impact of the Reserve Bank of India's ban on services of Paytm Payments Bank.

"One97 Communications Limited (OCL) is providing outplacement support to employees which have resigned as a part of the restructuring efforts by the company.

"The company's human resource teams are actively collaborating with over 30 companies that are currently hiring, and providing assistance to employees who have opted to share their information, facilitating their immediate outplacement," the company said on Monday.

Paytm, however, did not not disclose the number of employees impacted by the restructuring.

PHOTO: PTI

"Paytm is also disbursing bonuses which were due to employees, ensuring fairness and transparency in the process," the statement said.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had barred Paytm Payments Bank Limited (PPBL), an associate of Paytm, from accepting deposits, credit transactions or top-ups in any customer accounts, wallets, and FASTags, keeping in view the interest of customers, including merchants from March 15 onwards.

Paytm has reported widening of loss to Rs 550 crore in January-March 2024, following the ban imposed by RBI on transactions related to its payments bank.

The company had posted a loss of Rs 167.5 crore in the same period a year ago. *—PTI*

The trade route was closed after the outbreak of Covid-19 PHOTO: PTI

Indian traders seek deals with China through Lipulekh pass

PITHORAGARH, 10 JUNE

- Traders who belong to the Bhotia tribe started to raise their demand after China recently began process of implementing a pact, in which it agreed to open 14 trade passes with Nepal

Indian traders involved in border trade with China through the Lipulekh pass in Pithoragarh district since 1992, have requested the central government to take up the issue of resumption of border trade through this route with Beijing.

The trade route was closed rather suddenly after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2019, forcing Indian traders to return from the Taklakot mart in Tibet leaving behind their woollen products.

Five years have passed but the route has not been opened, an organisation of border traders in Dharchula said.

The traders who belong to the Bhotia tribe started to raise their demand for reopening of the trade route through Lipulekh after China recently began the process of implementing a pact, in which it had agreed to open all 14 trade passes with Nepal.

The implementation of the agreement inked by China and Nepal in December, 2022 began on 25 May this year, when China opened Piangi pass situated in Dolpa district of eastern Nepal, president of Bharat Tibetan Simant Vyapar Samiti, Dharchula Jeewan Singh Rongkali said.

According to Rongkali, Indian tribal traders from Dharchula alone have left trading items worth Rs 15 lakh in Taklakot Mart of Tibet at the time of closure of border trade in 2019, following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Goods of over 450 Indian tribal traders have been lying there for the last 5 years.

According to Rongkali, over 450 Indian traders used to supply essential goods to villagers of western Tibet through this trade route since 1992. *—PTI*

Sebi proposes strict rules for derivative trading

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Monday proposed stricter norms for the entry of individual stocks in the derivatives segment.

The new proposal would weed out stocks with consistently low turnover from the Futures & Option (F&O) segment of the bourses.

"Without sufficient depth in the underlying cash market and appropriate position limits around leveraged derivatives, there can be higher risks of market manipulation, increased volatility, and compromised investor protection," Sebi said in its consultation paper.

Given all this, there is a need for Sebi to ensure that only high-quality stocks in terms of size, liquidity, and market depth are available in the derivatives segment.

In addition, Sebi proposed that the maximum number of open contracts allowed for the underlying stock should be Rs 1,250 crore and Rs 1,750 crore. At present, the figure is pegged at Rs 500 crore.

Sebi said that stock should continue to be chosen from amongst the top 500 stocks in terms of average daily market capitalisation and average daily traded value on a rolling basis.

If a stock fails to meet the criteria for three months consecutively, then such stock should exit from the derivatives segment. It means no new contract would be issued on that stock. *—PTI*

Equity MF inflow swells to ₹34,697 cr; SIP at new high

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Equity mutual funds witnessed a staggering growth with inflow reaching a record high of Rs 34,697 crore in May, marking a 83 per cent surge from the preceding month, propelled by contributions from thematic funds and intermittent corrections that provided buying opportunity to investors.

This also marks the 39th consecutive month of net inflows in equity funds, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) showed on Monday.

Moreover, monthly contributions from Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) rose to Rs 20,904 crore in May, from Rs 20,371 crore in April, marking the second consecutive month of inflows exceeding Rs 20,000 crore.

Overall, the mutual fund industry has witnessed an inflow of Rs 1.1 lakh crore in the month under review as compared to Rs 2.4 lakh crore in April. The inflow was due to investment in equity as well as debt schemes.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

As per the data, equity-oriented schemes witnessed an inflow of Rs 34,697 crore in May, way higher than Rs 18,917 crore in April.

Except for the focused and equity-linked saving schemes (ELSS) categories, all the other categories witnessed good net inflows.

The categories which witnessed net outflows are short duration, medium duration, dynamic bond, credit risk, gilt fund and floater fund.

Besides, hybrid category schemes attracted Rs 17,991 crore and index funds and other ETFs collectively garnered Rs 15,180 crore. *—PTI*

Suraksha Group to pay 1st tranche of Rs 133 cr

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

- According to sources, Suraksha Group will soon infuse Rs 125 crore equity fund to start construction of stalled housing projects across Delhi-NCR

Mumbai-based Suraksha Group, which has recently taken control of debt-ridden realty firm Jaypee Infratech through an insolvency process, will pay the first instalment of around Rs 133 crore to Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority within three months as additional compensation to farmers.

On 24 May, National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) upheld Suraksha Realty's bid to acquire Jaypee Infratech Ltd (JIL) while directing it to pay Rs 1,334 crore to Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA) as compensation to the farmers.

On March 7 last year, the NCLT approved the bid of Suraksha Group to buy JIL. However, many parties, including YEIDA, filed a petition in the NCLAT challenging the NCLT order. YEIDA had claimed Rs 1,700 crore as farmers' compensation.

According to sources, Suraksha Group will soon infuse Rs 125 crore equity fund to start construction of stalled housing projects across Delhi-NCR.

The group will also pay the first instalment of Rs 133.43 crore to YEIDA within 90 days from the approval date, they added.

Suraksha will pay Rs 200.15 crore to YEIDA at the end of the first year from the approval date. The group will pay Rs 333.8 crore each at the end of the second, third and fourth year from the approval date, the sources said.

JIL has been facing a Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) since August 2017. The insolvency was initiated over an application by the IDBI Bank-led consortium. *—PTI*

FOR REPORTING SICK

AI crew flag concerns over chargesheet

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

An Air India Express staff union has claimed the airline has issued charge sheets against 200 cabin crew members for reporting sick last month when the carrier faced significant disruptions.

Air India Express Employees Union (AIXEU) has termed the airline's move as unfortunate and unfair labour practice.

In a letter to Air India Express chief Aloke Singh on Sunday, the union also warned the Tata Group-run airline's management that such actions could be detrimental to the interests of the company and its passengers.

According to Union sources, the charge-sheet was issued to around 200 cabin crew members on 5 June, with a deadline of 72 hours to file a response.

Around 200 cabin crew members of Air India Express went on strike on 7 May, to protest against the alleged mismanagement in the airline, resulting in cancellation of hundreds of flights.

Charge-sheet was issued to around 200 cabin crew members PHOTO: PTI

Consequently, the airline management terminated the services of 25 cabin crew members and warned the others to join work or else face the same action.

"The termination orders of the 25 cabin crew members were also withdrawn during conciliation based on the settlement agreement," the Union, which is affiliated to the RSS, said in the letter.

Requesting the management to refrain from reopening settled issues, AIXEU president K K Vijayakumar said in the letter, "Such actions could be detrimental to the interests of the enterprise and its passengers. Instead, I urge you to seek opportunities for cooperation to strengthen our industrial relations."

Stating that the entire issue was discussed before the Central Labour Commissioner (CLC) on May 9 and was amicably settled between the management and the union, it added, "Pursuing the charge-sheet and initiating punitive action against employees would only lead to unpleasant situations and worsen the already affected industrial relations."

This operational lapse is being misrepresented as the fault of the cabin crew employees," the Union said in the letter. *—PTI*

Reliance Power is now debt free on standalone basis

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

Reliance Power has become a debt-free company on a standalone basis clearing all outstanding dues to lenders, sources said.

The company had a debt of around Rs 800 crore, which has been repaid to banks, they said.

Between December 2023 and March 2024, Reliance Power signed multiple debt settlement agreements with various banks, including IDBI Bank, ICICI Bank, Axis Bank and DBS. The company has now repaid the entire debt to these banks, sources said.

As a result of that, Reliance Power, on a standalone basis, has become a debt free company.

In December 2023, Reliance power sold the development rights of its proposed 1,200 megawatt hydro-electric project in Arunachal Pradesh to THDC for Rs 128 crore. In March 2024, the company sold its 45 MW wind energy project in Vashpet, Maharashtra to JSW Renewable Energy for a consideration of Rs 132 crore.

Proceeds from the sale of these projects were used to retire debt. With participation of over 38 lakh retail investors, Reliance Power has an equity base of Rs 4,016 crore.

Reliance Power has an operating capacity of 5900 MW, which includes 3960 MW Sasan UMPP and 1200 MW Rosa Thermal power plant in Uttar Pradesh. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

MCA Prez Kale dies of cardiac arrest in New York

MUMBAI, 10 JUNE

Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) President Amol Kale has died of a cardiac arrest in New York after attending the T20 World Cup match between India and Pakistan. On Sunday, Kale was present at the Nassau County Cricket Stadium to watch the game between the arch-rivals along with other MCA officials including secretary Ajinkya Naik and apex council member Suraj Samat. Former India and Mumbai cricketer Ravi Shastri, who is present in the US as a commentator in the T20 World Cup, paid his tribute to Kale. "Deeply saddened by the passing of Amol Kale, President of the Mumbai Cricket Association. His passion for the sport and unwavering dedication to its development leaves a void in the cricketing community. Heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues," Shastri wrote on 'X'.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@Media_SAI

Gulveer eclipses 5,000m national record in Portland

PORTLAND, 10 JUNE

Asian Games bronze medallist athlete Gulveer Singh shattered the men's 5,000m national record to finish second at the Portland Track Festival High Performance Meet here. Competing in the Paul Banta Memorial race, the 26-year-old clocked 13:18.92 to better the earlier national mark of 13:19.30 set by Avinash Sable at the Sound Running On Track Fest in Los Angeles last year. Gulveer, who hails from western Uttar Pradesh, now holds the national record in both 10,000m and 5,000m races. He had won the 10,000 bronze medal at the Hangzhou Asian Games last year in a time of of 28.17.21 seconds. American distance runner Dylan Jacobs, a three-time NCAA champion, topped the event, clocking 13:18.18. India's Kartik Kumar finished 17th with a timing of 13:41.07, while Sable, who has a season's best of 13:20.37, did not finish the race. —*PTI*

Lamichhane to join Nepal team for last 2 league matches

KINGSTOWN, 10 JUNE

Denied US visa, Nepal's most high-profile cricketer Sandeep Lamichhane is joining his team for its Caribbean leg of the T20 World Cup campaign, the country's cricket association said on Monday. Lamichhane, who had an eight-year sentence for rape overturned on appeal because of "lack of evidence", was denied US visa twice last month despite interventions from the Nepal government. The 23-year-old was initially included in Nepal's 15-member squad for the tournament last month. —*PTI*

Viní Jr racist row: 3 Valencia fans get 8-months prison

MADRID, 10 JUNE

Three Valencia fans have been handed eight-month prison sentences after pleading guilty to racially insulting Real Madrid forward Vinícius Júnior in the first conviction for racism-related cases in professional soccer in Spain. The fans won't be allowed to enter soccer stadiums for two years and will have to pay for all the court proceedings. The fans were detained after a La Liga match between Real Madrid and Valencia at Mestalla Stadium in May 2023. The match was briefly stopped after Vinícius was insulted. Valencia had already banned the fans from Mestalla. —*AP*

Indian players practicing day before the match against Qatar on Monday

PHOTO: X/@INDIANFOOTBALL

Chhetri-less India enters WC qualifier against Qatar

It's a do or die for the Igor Stimac's Blue Tigers

DOHA, 10 JUNE

The influential Sunil Chhetri's absence will be a difficult void to fill as the Indian football team enters a testing transition phase with a crucial FIFA World Cup qualifying match against heavyweights Qatar on Tuesday.

The 39-year-old Chhetri called time on his glorious international career by playing in last week's fixture against Kuwait in Kolkata, which ended in a goal-less draw as the team failed to give him a fitting farewell.

Chhetri ended with 94 goals in 151 matches, having led the country with aplomb for more than a decade.

An acid test awaits India as they run into two-time Asian champions Qatar at the Jassim bin Hamad Stadium, knowing well that a defeat will end their campaign and dash all hopes of securing a maiden entry into the third round of the World Cup Qualifiers. India remain in the second spot with five points and a goal difference of -3. Afghanistan, who also played out a 0-0 draw with Qatar in their last outing in Hofuf, Saudi Arabia, are in third spot with a goal difference of -10, the stalemate making the job much more difficult for Igor Stimac's wards.

For the Blue Tigers, a result is a must. If they lose against Qatar, they will be eliminated from the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers third round.

However, if India beat Qatar, they will be in pole position to make the World Cup Qualifiers third round and a direct spot at the Asian Cup thanks to their much-superior goal difference over Afghanistan. If India draw against Qatar, they will qualify for the third round only if the match between Kuwait and Afghanistan, which will kick off in Kuwait City two hours after India's match, also ends in a draw. In that scenario, India will finish second in the group with six points, the same as Afghanistan, but with a better goal difference. —*PTI*

UEFA EURO 2024

Top players who will be missed in Germany

Erling Haaland, Marcus Rashford

PHOTO: X

LONDON, 10 JUNE

The UEFA European Championship 2024 will begin on June 14 with 24 teams competing for the right to be crowned champions of Europe.

Ahead of the month-long tournament, Al Jazeera takes a look at some of the high-profile players who are missing from the showpiece event in Germany.

While Odegaard and Haaland enjoyed hugely impressive individual performances in the Premier League – and are beloved by their clubs and country – both will be forced to sit out the European summer after their nation, Norway, stunningly failed to qualify for Euro 2024.

Misfiring forward Marcus Rashford was left out of Gareth Southgate's provisional squad for the Euros, just a year and a half after his dynamic outing at the World Cup in Qatar.

The 26-year-old suffered a loss in form in 2023-24, registering a paltry eight goals in 43 games in all competitions – a huge drop from the 30 goals he scored in the previous season.

Rashford's omission from the national football squad was undoubtedly the biggest shock to English fans, as he had been a familiar presence in Southgate's squad for years.

Jadon Sancho's difficult spell at Old Trafford in the first half of the season proved to be a deciding factor as Southgate left him out, too.

With his flashy, once-in-a-generation displays in midfield, the technically gifted Paul Pogba played a major role in France's World Cup victory in 2018 but was forced to miss the 2022 edition in Qatar due to injuries. Despite returning to fitness this season, Pogba will not play in the upcoming Euros after the Juventus midfielder was handed a four-year doping ban for testing positive for a banned drug.

Austria's David Alaba was left out of coach Ralf Rangnick's provisional squad due to an injury – but there was an unexpected twist to this story.

Top-rated central midfielder Gavi, a regular for Barcelona and Spain, will not play for La Roja at the Euros as he, too, continues to recover from an ACL injury.

The 19-year-old picked up the knee injury during Spain's Euro qualifier against Georgia in November and won't be able to participate this time as well.

—*Al Jazeera*

Nagal gets 77th ATP rank, to represent India in Paris

NEW DELHI, 10 JUNE

India's Sumit Nagal climbed 18 places to a career-best 77th in the latest ATP rankings issued on Monday, all but sealing a spot in the Paris Olympics men's singles draw.

Nagal has 713 ATP points. The improvement in his rankings was due to Nagal bagging the men's singles crown at the Heilbronn Neckarcup 2024 Challenger event in Germany on Sunday, beating Switzerland's Alexander Ritschard in a three-set thriller.

The Indian won 6-1 6(5)-7 6-3 in the final that lasted two hours and 22 minutes. Rankings, as on Monday, will be the basis for deciding entries for the Games.

As per the established criteria, the top 56 players, both in men's and women's rankings, will attain automatic qualification for the Olympics but no more than four per country can make the cut for the Games, a rule which allows lower ranked players to sneak into the draw.

Nagal looks good to secure the last available ranking-enabled spot in the draw. The last time India had a player in the Olympics main draw was the 2012 Games when Somdev Devvarman made it thanks to a wildcard.

This was the sixth ATP Challenger title for Nagal and the second of the year after the Chennai Open crown on home soil earlier this year.

Nagal, who is currently the best-ranked Indian singles player, has won four ATP Challenger titles since 2023 and the win in Heilbronn was his fourth title on clay tennis courts. —*PTI*

Sumit Nagal in action
PHOTO: PTI

Sinner PHOTO: X/@JANNIKSIN

SINNER OVERTAKES THE GREAT 'DJOKER' TO DEBUT AT NO. 1

PARIS, 10 JUNE

Jannik Sinner made his debut at No. 1 in the ATP rankings on Monday, moving up one spot to replace the injured Novak Djokovic there.

The 22-year-old Sinner is the first player from Italy to reach No. 1 since the computerized rankings began in 1973. He will be the top-seeded man at Wimbledon, where play begins 1 July. Sinner is 33-3 this season with three titles, including earning his first Grand Slam trophy at the Australian Open in January, part of a 19-0 run to begin 2024.

One came Friday in five sets in the semifinals at the French Open, which Alcaraz went on to win by beating Alexander Zverev in the final on Sunday. Alcaraz's third major title allowed him to rise one place in the rankings to No. 2, with Djokovic at No. 3, and Zverev remaining at No. 4.

Djokovic was the defending champion in Paris and needed to get back to the final in order to stay at No. 1 because of his lack of play this year and failure to reach the title match at any tournament so far. —*AP*

Australia Open: Prannoy to spearhead Indian challenge

SYDNEY, 10 JUNE

HS Prannoy will look to regain his lost form when he spearheads India's challenge at the Australian Open badminton tournament starting on Tuesday.

Prannoy, seeded fifth here, didn't have best of results in the last two tournaments. He was stunned by compatriot Meiraba Luwang Maisnam in the men's singles opening round of Thailand Open last month.

If that was not enough, world No. 10 Prannoy lost to world No. 11 Kenta Nishimoto 13-21 21-14 15-21 in a 45-minute Round of 16 match in Singapore Open.

Sameer Verma will play Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo of Indonesia in the opening round, while Ravi faces a tough opponent in eight seed Loh Kean Yew of Singapore.

Other Indians to feature in the men's singles are Mithun Manjunath, who will take on Indonesia's Alwi Farhan, Kiran Geoge who is up against Canada's Xiaodong Sheng, S Sankar Muthusamy Subramanian who is pitted against top seed Jonatan Christie of Indonesia.

In women's singles, eighth seed Aakarshi Kashyap will lead the Indian charge. She will play Ukraine's Polina Buhrova in the opening round.

No Indian features in the men's doubles, while Panda sisters, Rutuparna and Swetaparna, seeded seventh, and the pair of Harshita Rout and Sruti Swain will lead India's charge in the women's doubles.

The third Indian mixed doubles pair of Ayush Raj Gupta and Sruti Swain will play against Australian duo of Jordan Yang and Sydney Tjonadi in the opener.

—*PTI*

HS Prannoy
PHOTO: PTI

India vs Pak: 'Wasim willingly wasted balls'

KARACHI, 10 JUNE

Former skipper Salim Malik has accused Imad Wasim of deliberately wasting balls in Pakistan's six-run loss to arch-rivals India in the T20 World Cup in New York.

Chasing an underwhelming 120-run target, Pakistani batters consumed 59 dot balls to be restricted to 113 for 7 in New York on Sunday.

Wasim took 23 balls to score his 15 runs in the losing cause.

Another former captain Shahid Afridi feels all is not well in the Pakistan dressing room and some players have issues with skipper Babar Azam.

Former speedster Shoaib Akhtar minced no words in criticising Pakistan's below-par performance, saying the Babar Azam-led side doesn't deserve to be in the Super Eight stage. After back-to-back defeats against minnows USA and India, Pakistan's Super Eight chances now rests on winning big against Canada and Ireland, besides hoping that the Americans lose to India and Ireland. Even in that scenario both the teams will end on four points each and it will come down to the net run rate. —*PTI*

GRAND PRIX

Verstappen wins in Canada for 3rd time

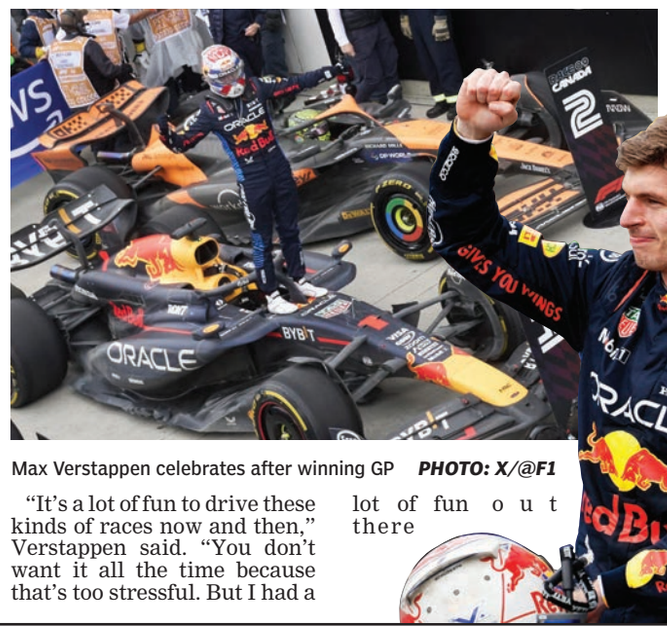
MONTREAL, 10 JUNE

Max Verstappen won the Canadian Grand Prix for the third straight year for the Red Bull star's 60th Formula 1 victory and sixth in nine races this season.

Verstappen started second in the rain alongside pole-sitter George Russell and dominated late again at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve on Ile Notre-Dame on Sunday. The 26-year-old Dutchman has a staggering 50 victories in the last 75 F1 races.

Verstappen finished 3.879 seconds ahead of McLaren's Lando Norris in the 70-lap race on 4.36 km road course.

The race Sunday started with a soaking wet track before the sun emerged 10 minutes in, but rain showers returned periodically throughout the afternoon.



Max Verstappen celebrates after winning GP PHOTO: X/@F1

"It's a lot of fun to drive these kinds of races now and then," Verstappen said. "You don't want it all the time because that's too stressful. But I had a lot of fun out there today."

Norris lost a 10-second lead when Logan Sargeant brought put the safety car on Lap 26.

"We should have won the race today and we didn't so, frustrating," Norris said. "We had the pace. We should have won today. It's as simple as that."

Verstappen started second Sunday on a tiebreaker after having the same lap time as Russell in qualifying Saturday. Russell got the pole because he posted the time first. —*PTI*

Kavin & Mohsin: The Honda India riders

MOTEGI, 10 JUNE

Kavin Samaar Quintal's bike engine seized, he crashed and everything went black around him during Honda India Talent Cup back in 2020.

Such was the ferocity and impact of the crash that at least 13 screws had to be placed inside his body, including nine in his collar bone, for the treatment of his injuries. But that did not deter him from pursuing his passion—bike racing.

During the Thailand Talent Cup in 2022, the Chennai racer again met with a crash when the rider ahead applied sudden brakes and rammed into him. His race suit tore up, leaving him with laceration and burn injury in his right arm.

Kavin rides in AP250 class in Asia Road Racing Championship (AARC) but reckons that he is ready to jump to the 600cc class. His eighth place finish in season 2023 has been Kavin's best show in AP250 class so far.

Interest in motorsport is largely restricted to Southern part of the country and losing the F1 race, which was held in NCR for three years, did not help the cause. —*PTI*

Kavin Samaar Quintal's
PHOTO: PTI